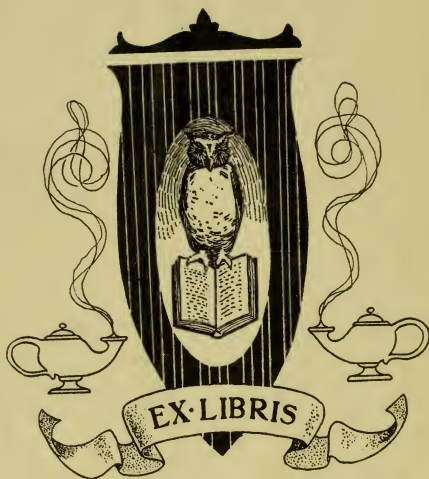




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James H. Gilmer -

THE
CORRESPONDENCE
OF
WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

EDITED BY HIS SONS,
ROBERT ISAAC WILBERFORCE, M. A.
VICAR OF EAST FARLEIGH, LATE FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE;
AND
SAMUEL WILBERFORCE, M. A.
ARCHDEACON OF SURREY, RECTOR OF BRIGHSTONE.

REVISED AND ENLARGED FROM THE LONDON EDITION.

As he had a great number of friends of the best men, so no man had ever the confidence to avow himself to be his enemy.—LORD CLARENDON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:
HENRY PERKINS—134 CHESTNUT STREET.
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CORRESPONDENCE

OF

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed, "Private.—Will. Smith, his own loss by a fire, and multo magis, Fox's death.")

Parndon, September 11, 1806.

My dear Friend,

On my own concerns, as you are sufficiently interested about them to inquire, I must say one word. I hope we are very nearly insured; but I shall be a very great sufferer, having previously incurred prodigious expenses and sustained considerable loss, all reimbursement for either of which, is by this accident and other circumstances set at an indefinite distance: or rather, in my own opinion, rendered utterly hopeless; but these things, though very serious, do not touch me to the quick. My children must all have somewhat the less, and my boys must depend yet more than otherwise on their own exertions. Whether wisely or not, I feel a far deeper concern in the assured expectation of that event, which, ere you receive this, I conclude will have taken place. In point of social intercourse, Fox was more to me, previously to his coming into office; but when the thousand considerations pour in upon my mind, which rendered his life at this moment desirable, not only to

himself but to the public—when I reflect on the anxieties and disappointments which have clouded over the few short months that have elapsed since he has had it in his power to do any thing—the untoward circumstances which have prevented his accomplishing the first wishes of his heart, and have for the moment, perhaps, rather injured his public character; that at such a crisis, the hand of Providence should snatch him out of life, and put an everlasting bar against the correction of past mistakes, or the execution of wiser plans—should deny him the consolation, above all, of enjoying that victory which he seemed on the point of attaining over our common enemy, the great object of our mutual detestation, and which will now exult over him with hopes, which God forbid should be realized,—that he should be deprived, I had almost said defrauded, (though I am sure without an impious meaning,) of that solid and permanent glory, which, had a little more space been allowed, I think he would have secured by conferring benefits on his country and on mankind; when I ponder on these things, I am apt to think his lot peculiarly severe, and when I look to consequences, but too possible not to be apprehended, I fear for multitudes, and, above all, for the success of that most important cause to which I have already alluded. If Grenville should now cool as a friend, or Windham grow more violent in his enmity, who is, with half the efficacy, to stimulate the one or to restrain the other—in short, who is to occupy his station? When Pitt died, as a great man, with many excellent qualities, and leaving very few who could challenge competition with him, I did sincerely lament him, but Fox yet lived, and I had much public, personal, and political (leaving out party) consolation. Now, with a high opinion of many who are left, I cannot flatter any one so much as to say that I think him quite equal to those who are departed, or place in him the entire confidence I have done in him, who I fear has already followed his illustrious rival.

How few are there to whom I could thus write; per-

haps I say too much even to you; but I know how completely you will feel with me on one point, and how much on some others; and I have just received from Lord Howick and Lord Henry Petty such accounts of poor Fox, as leaving me without hope, even for a day, render this my most consoling employment. What we do, to do quickly, is assuredly one of the first lessons which such an event inculcates; that when in our private consultations we contemplated its possibility, the idea did not impel us to strive more eagerly to get more done during his continuance with us, I own I do greatly lament, but perhaps it was impossible; perhaps, for there is a direction wiser than ours, it might have been inexpedient, perhaps we may yet be successful as soon as we ought to wish it. When in town a few days ago, at Clarkson's request (who is still here) I asked Lord Moira about an evidence, the lieutenant-colonel of his regiment, he immediately replied, "What occasion can you have for him? Surely that business is finished." We must, however, be far from thinking so, but view the deprivation of our great ally as creating the necessity for increased exertions on our own parts. I have not written to you sooner, partly because C—— did. We talked over the points of yours, and I do not recollect any thing in which we disagreed either from each other or from you. I grieve at Lord Grenville's change of opinion, for I can call it no less. Abolition by duties with any supposable increase, is at best gradual, it is liable to all manner of evasion, and every chance of eventual defeat, whilst the great principle, that solid and unsubvertible basis of all our arguments and measures, is by such means almost virtually relinquished; and in addition to all the hitherto suggested objections, (in which I agree,) I feel another, perhaps, rather a refined one, but I am sure it is often true, that where duties do not speedily cease by the destruction of the object taxed, it is their natural tendency to perpetuate it in some degree or other, by creating an interest in their own continuance, and often a very strong one too. Duties raise

money, which affords emolument to many, both in the application and collection, &c. &c.

Your last suggestions respecting the expediency of attempting to obviate difficulties are very prudent and highly important, but present a formidable aspect. As to Barham's plan, I will say more about it when I shall have received the letters. I fear it is wholly impracticable. Your account of yourself is very unsatisfactory; pray send me a better soon.

Affectionately yours,
W. S.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY BANKES, ESQ.

Lyme, September 25th, 1806.
Thursday night.

My dear Bankes,

I have indeed, as your letter (just now received) remarks, a very numerous host of correspondents, and having brought with me to this place such a box full of their unanswered epistles as to employ me for a full month since my arrival, I never felt the force of the observation more strongly than at this moment. But it is with truth I assure you, that had I known your address, a letter to you would have been superadded to all my others, and what is more, would have been considered like the addition of a negative quantity in algebra, as subtracting from my load, rather than adding to it. Your account sets me quite a longing. It is, I suppose, in part the effect of imagination, and of old associations, but I feel a fondness for that country of lakes and mountains which is perfectly extravagant, and I seldom have been more strongly tempted than I was to take a beautifully situated house, the lease of which was offered me, at the head of Windermere. Both you and Mrs. Bankes will enjoy your ramble the more from having so long denied yourselves all excursions. I feel quite as you do about Fox, with some very strong apprehensions of our missing him in the case of the Aboli-

tion of the Slave Trade. The newspapers of to-day confirm the arrangement you had anticipated, and which is the best which the nature of the case admitted, that I mean of Lord Howick's taking the lead in the House of Commons with Fox's place. They have likewise done well to reinforce their ranks with Tierney. He, however, has proved himself less able in defence than in attack. I am looking out with some curiosity as well as anxiety to see where Buonaparte, who has suddenly disappeared from Paris, with a view as it is supposed to strike some military stroke, will come to light. I wish he be not too rapid for them once more. It really seems like the infatuation of Providence, *quos Deus vult perdere, &c.*, that the King of Prussia should resist the strongest temptations to join the late confederacy, while it was yet in untouched strength, and yet now, when Buonaparte has trampled on all his enemies, and exacted his own terms from Austria, after forcing Russia to retire home again, that he should select the present above all others as the time for setting bounds to French encroachments. It may end well; but I own I fear it will not.

But who, think you, paid me a visit here the other day? Not Nicoll, but ipse Robson;—it is really true. I own I was at first disposed to be a little savage, but there was nobody by, so I behaved, or rather “be-aved,” though his first abord was not so well calculated to soften prejudices, for he told me at once that he was come to ask if I could give him any intelligence concerning the dissolution of parliament. I was in some measure repaid for his visit by one curious, though far from satisfactory, article of intelligence. He had been invited to dine at Oatlands, on the occasion of a grand entertainment which the Duke of York gave to all the royal brothers. There were about twenty-five people at table, where (*credat Judæus*, I mean Goldsmith) Robson avouches he was admitted, and the windows down to the ground being wide open, a much greater number of outside passengers were to all intents and purposes in the room. When a cacoethes seizing the prince, who

was perfectly sober, he made the whole party a speech half an hour long, in the course of which he declared that he might as well tell it now, since it would soon be known, that the whole royal family, from the king downwards, were decidedly of his own opinion, and of Fox's, that Great Britain ought to expend every man and every guinea rather than lose Hanover. I own I was not greatly edified by the declaration.

I have learnt, from good authority, that it is all but certain parliament will not meet before the end of November. *Entre nous* I am wishing, when we do meet, to be ready with a publication on the Abolition, conceiving this to be just the period when such a work may be of use; when ministry, being for the most part with us, people may be glad to be furnished with reasons for being earnest on our side, or for coming round. But owing chiefly to a succession of little indispositions, either my own or my family's since my mass of letters was a little got under, I am now beginning my work, and I doubt if I shall be able to finish it in time.

I must bid you farewell, with kind remembrances to Mrs. Banks and to any friends of mine whom you may fall in with, whether Grimstons, or Lord Lowther and Lady L., or any other.

I am, my dear Banks,

Your faithful friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

T. BABINGTON, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed by Mr. Wilberforce.—“Babington—excellent picture of his mind.”)

My dear W.

Though I cannot call on you to-day, and shall not be able to see you fight your battle in the House, you are and will be much in my mind. Send a verbal message how you do. May God bless you and your cause! Do not be too anxious, for events are in His hands, and He may see fit that you should not be vic-

torious at present. In our zeal to do His will, we sometimes proceed as if we wished the government of human affairs to be in our hands instead of His. Remember how many years elapsed, and what mortifying events took place, between the time when Moses was marked out as a deliverer of his nation, and left the court of Pharaoh, and his final success in the work assigned to him. "In patience possess ye your souls," is a direction which no description of Christians, perhaps, is more bound to bear constantly in mind, than those who are signal instruments in a great and righteous cause. Consider how much more you have been enabled to do in yours than any one who has preceded you; and how thankful you should be for having been thought worthy to sow the seed, even though it should be appointed to your successors to reap the harvest. Though this should be the case (contrary to all our wishes and prayers) you will be in the very situation of our Saviour, who tells his disciples, that they would reap what others had sown.

I sat down with a design of only asking after your health, but have been drawn on to preach. You will excuse me. My mind was full of floating thoughts which occurred to me this morning. I am pretty well again, but must be careful. Jean is, I hope, better, but keeps her chamber. Once more, God bless you!

I shall station a servant at your house to bring intelligence of the event to-night. Do get somebody (Gisborne, if with you), when all is over, to give me on a scrap of paper the event and numbers of the division.

T. B.

LORD GRENVILLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Dropmore, February 24, 1807.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have just received the account of last night, and I cannot forbear adding a very few words to the congratulations which you will receive from all quarters on this

great event, which we may certainly now consider as quite decided.

I can conceive nothing in this world more gratifying than your feelings must be on this occasion, and to you it will not sound strange to say, that I trust we may all of us, who have in any degree contributed to this great work of mercy, each in proportion to our exertions in it, look to a reward far beyond those of this world, from that Being who has declared to us that inasmuch as we have done it to our fellow-creatures, He will accept it (such is His unmeasurable goodness) as done even to Himself.

I really feel quite overpowered with the thoughts of this success, and can readily conceive what your feelings must be, who may justly say to yourself, that to you and to your exertions alone this thing is to be attributed.

Ever most truly yours,

GRENVILLE.

RALPH CREYKE, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Marton, February 27th, 1807.

My dear Sir,

Yesterday's and this morning's newspapers have so delighted me and mine, that I must write to say, that we rejoice with you upon your virtuous triumph. Your friends would feel the warmth of the panegyrics more than you would; and yet although *superbia*, when it can truly be said that it is *quærita meritis*, be allowable, you will think more of the substantial good and happiness of others than the exaltation of your own character. The conclusion of the Solicitor General's speech was most beautiful, and I hope that Mrs. Wilberforce was in Old Palace Yard, and if she was upon the watch, as all affectionate wives are, for her lord's return, she might hear the three cheers, which my paper represents to have been loud and distinct. No Roman general with the senate at his heels could step with a firmer tread than you crossed from the House of Commons home. But if

I go farther I may not be able to hold my horse, and come to the disgrace of a tumble, and therefore I will pull up in time. I was surprised to see the minority so small as sixteen, and shall be anxious to see their names. Upon some question the late Lord Chancellor Northington declared that the non-contents had it, and four lords only went below the bar from a full House. Some one wondered how he could be so much mistaken. His answer was "I had a mind to see who the fools were." I expected a long speech from Mr. S., who is now, I understand, partner in a West India house, and therefore one of the gang. Where was the mild and gentle member for Sussex? Perhaps you will be so good as to send me down Mr. Whitbread's Poor Bill, and I will return it to you with my opinion upon that subject. It is a disease like the ague—every one has an infallible nostrum to cure it; but I am regularly bred, and think bark the only safe prescription. In the same estimation I hold the statute of Queen Elizabeth. I warn you, therefore, what opinion mine is likely to be. Some little ingredients adapted to each constitution may be added, and the dose may be exhibited in the most fashionable form, with currant jelly, or any thing more palatable, but still the efficacy of it must depend upon bark.

I must return to the newspaper; I was very much pleased to read so good an account of Mr. Fawkes's speech. He could not have chosen a subject more creditable to his excellent heart, or more suited to the display of his abilities. He would also sleep well on Tuesday morning. You must be all so much above this nether world, that frost and snow cannot affect you; we mere mortals in this remote corner are suffering under the severities of Greenland. Last week the weather was in Midsummer, and now in Christmas.

With our kindest remembrance to your happy family, and best wishes of a continuance of health and happiness to yourself,

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever yours faithfully,

RALPH CREYKE.

WILLIAM BURGH, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

York, March 17, 1807.

My dear W.

I shall never be in a state of comfort with regard to your bill, till I see that it has actually received the royal assent; every delay threatens mischief, and the amendments (so called) in your House may induce new difficulties in the House of Lords when it is returned to them. Do not suffer its adversaries to carry a single point; if not utterly suppressed they will endeavour to rise again, and Mr. — already looks forward to 1808, for the repeal of this act of 1807. As to Mr. —, his argument, from the decrease of his own negroes, has in it something so,—I know not what to call the hideous deformity,—but had I used it, I should feel an extinction of hope; I should feel that I was a murderer—what, because he has destroyed, does he look for more subjects for destruction, and consider this as a reason for the supply! give him his position, and do you draw the inference rather than deny it, and I think the man that can then abet him is just as bad as he. I like his brutality to you; it can never affect you, while the recoil must necessarily stagger himself. I conclude the subject, by once more urging you to a tenacious adherence to the original form of the bill, as far as is practicable, and to the utmost feasible expedition, and even to threats against the slavery of the negroes now in the West Indies, if your present measure be any farther resisted.

When James II. apprised his parliament that he had employed papists in the army, and looked for their sanction of the measure, instead of authorizing him to proceed, they made him an offer to indemnify those that had already accepted of commissions; and why you should now go farther I profess I am unable to discover. Are revolutions so desirable, that we wish to put things into the situation that provoked the last? or do we suppose that this is a situation to which, with all our efforts, they will not return? The capacity and bravery of

papists are a current theme, and let me allow them, but who will persuade me to allow their fidelity to a protestant throne? The argument drawn from their adherence to our ancient kings is answered, by saying that these kings did not sit upon a protestant throne. Occasions do not offer daily, but look to the three or four that have occurred in later times, and how few are the papists of any consequence, that have not incurred forfeitures or experienced mercy. Rebellion and a perpetual reference to papal supremacy, openly in ecclesiastical, and though not now acknowledged, yet certainly and even necessarily in state matters, have characterized their body during the whole of the last century; and at present I profess I see nothing brought forward in their behalf but menaces of still more active exertions, provided they are not indulged. The frightful rebellion in 1642 was carried to the recorded extremity in consequence of Lord Strafford's array of papists in Ireland; and in Ireland we are now daily amused by exaggerated statements of popish population and power: it is, therefore, our part now to give leaders to the danger with which they thus threaten us? The men of this description who on board our ships, or in the field, have acted with distinguished bravery during the present war are privates, and consequently not men in whom any confidence was ever reposed; as brave men, therefore, let them be rewarded, but not with commissions to command: and so very obvious is this inference, that the use of this and similar arguments, (as leading to the measure in hand,) amount to almost a demonstration, that there is treason at home, as surely as ever there was treason at Ulm. Had James been complied with, would the acquittal of the seven bishops have been hailed with acclamations by the army at Hounslow? O that we may now find seven bishops to repay the compliment that was then paid to a protestant bench! While papal supremacy is the object, while it is the very creed, what else can toleration mean than establishment? *Permission to power*, and that, too, a power which identifies itself with the power even of the Almighty, is a flat con-

tradition in terms ; if the present claims of popery are admitted, all is indeed subverted. We are daily told of the superior illumination of our brilliant age ; there is one light, however, the light of experience, which we ought not to extinguish, and which, if we walk by it, we shall find fully capable of casting into comparative darkness, the coxcomb pretensions of our modern candid speculations. But King William is forgotten : the nature of popery is not considered : it is not known, though it may be easily discovered, if men would but look : but it is a hard thing that we are in danger of seeing the overthrow of our once happy constitution by the union of lurking propensity, with vanity and ignorance. (Cowardice perhaps may be added to the group.) My dearest Wilberforce, I tremble when I think of the precipice we stand upon, and that must excuse the importunity with which I try to induce your opposition to the ruinous measure. I write, too when I have but little time. It is not for a community of legal protection that they look—they *are* protected ; it is civil power, which they will exercise to the ruin of protestants, and destruction of their civil protection.

I hope Mrs. — mends ; she might have learned, from her own practice, to fall without such frightful consequences ; remind her from me, of her being rolled, on an illumination night, in the mire of Bath. I wish her better with all my heart.

To you, my dear friend, to Mrs. Wilberforce, and all you love, I sincerely wish every good.

I am most affectionately yours,

W. BURGH.

St. Patrick's day—who opposed the commencing encroachments of Rome ?

There is in Dublin a handsome equestrian statue of King William III., round which it has been always customary for the lord lieutenant, the houses of parliament, and all officers of state, &c. to go in procession, on the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne. This year this ceremony has been omitted by the representative of a

king bequeathed to these realms by King William, for the purpose of maintaining the protestant religion against the agents of Rome ; it has been omitted by the representative of William Lord Russel !!!

REV. T. GISBORNE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Yoxall Lodge, April 10, 1807.

My dear Wilberforce,

I really know not that I can suggest to you any thing worth reading on either of the topics concerning which you call upon me. To begin with the more important—the prints. Were the prints engraved and lying before me, I perhaps could say whether the lights were tolerably well kept together, and whether the trees were like trees, at least English trees ; but as to suggesting subjects, I can do nothing : and of the features of Africa I know nothing beyond the face of a negro, except a little of that of a lion. Perhaps the artist may choose the allegorical line. In that case, I would submit for your judgment “ The progress of taming an Ourang Outang.” In the first plate, he may be represented as eating a child ; in the second, as wheeling a wheelbarrow ; in the third, mending his waistcoat ; in the fourth, making punch ; in the fifth, dancing a minuet ; in the sixth, installed a Knight of the Garter. If the artist determines to proceed in the common-place way he must follow common-place items ; beginning with scenes of kidnapping and village-burning, and closing with peace, and plenty, and religion.

Aurea nunc, olim sylvestribus horrida dumis.

He may enliven his scenery with groups of elephants, and hippopotami, and camelopards ; and with knots of slave-traders hanging themselves in the background.

So much for pictured civilization. On actual civilization I have still less to say ; indeed, nothing beyond common-place ; for common-place it is to talk in gene-

ral terms about setting up schools, sending missionaries, and introducing manufactures. Local knowledge must come in to show how these generals are to be reduced practically into particularities. I hope that you will be able to make some good use of the forts and public establishments which we possess along the African coast. Cannot these lions' dens be transformed into central reservoirs for distributing knowledge, religious as well as commercial? They seem to meet the demand. Δες σου στῶ.

I heartily desire every good result, under the Divine blessing, from your great meeting* and its decisions. Keep your measures simple, and beware of theorizing.

Kind wishes, &c.

Ever affectionately yours,

T. GISBORNE.

RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO A MEMBER OF MR.
WILBERFORCE'S COMMITTEE.

Lincoln's Inn Fields, May 21, 1807.

Dear Sir,

The above is intended for Wilberforce's election-subscription. I have hesitated about sending it before, on account of the peculiar situation in which I stand at the present moment. But I think it rather hard that, because I am Chancellor of the Exchequer, I should be deprived of the means which every body else has of showing either that he is a friend of W., or a friend to the Abolition of the slave trade. At the same time I can feel that W. himself may not like that my name should appear among the list of his subscribers, and I must therefore beg before you put it down, that you will consult W. on that point. The only difference will be, that you will apply it anonymously, if he disapproves of the appearance of my name, (which I think he may do very ationally, and therefore certainly without any offence

* Formation of the African Institution.

to me,) but if he sees no objection to my name appearing, I do not think I need feel any, and in that case you may put down my name or not, just as you think it will best promote Wilberforce's cause, and serve his interest, without injuring his character for independence or any thing else. I fear his contest will be expensive; but I have no doubt, if his friends do not desert him, that he will unquestionably succeed.

I am, dear Sir,
Your most obedient, humble servant,
S. PERCEVAL.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO W. HEY, ESQ.

Brighton, August 15, 1807.

My dear Sir,

From the time of Mr. Sheridan's first announcing his Bill* I was on my guard, and I only kept back in the earliest stages of the business, because, for various reasons, too long to be now communicated, I judged that to be the course of conduct most likely to insure my ultimate success. I much doubt whether he was serious in meaning to carry the measure through—not but that he is likely to be more in earnest, more consistent, and more persevering (alas!) in such a case as this, than in any other. He seems to live on that, to me, melancholy distich, "Life is a jest," &c. When he was chatting with some of the government about his speech on Irish affairs, he justified himself by saying, with his usual laugh, "Consider, I have not made one rebellious speech this whole session! I must make one!" Though he has had an almost Herculean measure of strength of constitution, yet, as his faculties now betray some symptoms of decay, I suspect it will not be long before he breaks entirely. Yet, with all his vices and extravagancies, there is a certain degree of political principle—

* Mr. Sheridan's Bill was to take the jurisdiction of ale-houses from the Middlesex magistrates. Mr. Hey had expressed his fear lest it should lead to the destruction of the authority of magistrates in general.

but I have dwelt longer than I meant on this motley character. * * * *

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

B. Wood, January 4, 1808.

My dear Friend,

I cannot forbear writing one line to rejoice with Mrs. W. on your convalescence: I do it with the less regret as it demands no answer.

I need not, indeed I cannot, say how deeply anxious we have been on your account. We were happily relieved from additional anxiety by the kindness of Mrs. H. Thornton, who sent me a daily bulletin from the beginning of your illness down to yesterday. I no less fervently bless God for your recovery, than I offered up my poor prayers while you were ill.

My favourite Nicole, in a letter to a pious friend of that famous penitent the Duchess de Longueville, who was given over for ten years, says to her, "While you have been dying, one half of the human race have actually died," and goes on to prove, by calculation, that in twenty years a number equal to the whole stock of mankind die. In my own little way I often think what multitudes have perished who were in perfect health when I was taken ill a year and a half ago;—even this autumn, beginning with the Duchess of Gloucester, and ending with the Dowager Lady Bathurst, I have lost seventeen old attached friends! If I persist in living, at this rate I shall very soon have none left.

By the way, are you much acquainted with Nicole? I wish some of our high professors would read him. There is a delicacy in his morals that I have rarely met with; indeed I think in his letters he reigns supreme in regard to *les petites morales*—subjects too particular and minute for sermons or professed treatises:—the domestic

charities—conquests over temper—prejudices—petty indulgences—self-love, &c. God Almighty bless you!

Yours ever, my dear Friend,

Most truly,

H. MORE.

Poor Patty has deafness, and a stunning complaint in her head, added to her other complaint, but does not abate one jot of heart or hope.

Poor Horace Noel!

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO CAPTAIN ———.

London, May 17, 1808.

My dear Sir,

When my dear Mrs. W. expresses (as she has but too much occasion for doing) her kind regret at seeing so little of me, I often reply by asking her what she would feel if I were in your profession?

I really quite felt for your lady (to whom, when you do see her, I beg my kind remembrances by anticipation, if you will excuse the Irishism) when I heard that you had been called away from her so soon after your marriage. Do you remember the instance, amid innumerable others which shows the condescending kindness with which the Almighty entered into the feelings of His creatures, evidenced in the permission granted to the Israelites to remain at home with their brides for a whole year, and not to join the army till that period was expired. . . .

May 28.

When I had written thus far, I was forced to break off, and it is literally true, that I have scarcely had a minute at my own disposal, or at the service of my friends, ever since. We are kept up almost every night in the House of Commons till two or three o'clock, (sometimes much later,) and my weakly frame renders it

necessary for me to borrow or rather steal, (for it is not restored again, borrowing, therefore, is a very improper phrase,) as much for rest from the following morning as has been taken from sleep in the preceding night. And then, as this day, (near three o'clock,) from the time of my coming out of my bedroom, my house has had an incessant succession of visitors till now, when I have slipped out to a neighbour's to use my pen, if possible, for an hour—even here, however, I have been discovered and interrupted. I trouble you with all these egotisms, partly because we naturally mention our grievances in writing to a friend, and partly because it will account for my being so bad a correspondent. Do me the justice, however, to believe that you are not forgotten by me; and I heartily wish it may please the Almighty to bless you with every comfort, both here and hereafter. I must break off, having a multitude of unanswered letters beside me. Believe me always, with cordial esteem and regard,

My dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

CHARLES GRANT, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Russell Square, July 16, 1808.

My dear Sir,

I told you of the general import of certain proceedings of the Bengal government against the missionaries in that country, and of the tenor of the papers which came home, on that subject. Those papers are now to be answered, and the chairman and myself have an exceeding difficult task to get the Court and the Board of Control to agree to any answer framed on what we think proper principles,—that is, admitting the duty of introducing Christianity into India, laying down also the necessity of discretion in all attempts to that end, recognizing the right of the government to interfere where the conduct of the missionaries shall appear likely

to hazard the public tranquillity; and, lastly, distinguishing in the proceedings of the Bengal government what has been consistent with those principles, and what has gone beyond them. We think it of great importance that the sentiments of the Court should be so laid down on those points as to settle the general question concerning missions to the East, and to leave nothing open for future discussion but the conduct of missionaries in the exercise of an admitted right, and the conduct of government towards them. We have prepared the draft of a despatch to Bengal on this subject; but the President of the Board of Control,—to whom we have first shown it, wishing to conciliate his concurrence, in order the better to deal with the Court,—greatly disagrees with us. We understand, however, that he means to consult certain members of the Cabinet on this subject, and among them Mr. Perceval more particularly. I have so little acquaintance with him, and am otherwise so delicately circumstanced, that I cannot enter into it with him; but it is of great importance that he should rightly understand all the bearings of it before he gives his opinion. I wish with all my heart you were near enough to hear me more at large upon it, and to speak to him immediately, for the consideration of it will come on soon. As this cannot be, I hope you will feel yourself at liberty to write to him. The general importance of the subject, the interest you take in it, and the high probability of its soon becoming a theme of public discussion, with the leisure you now have, may be sufficient reasons for your addressing him upon it. The points most necessary to be enforced on his attention appear to me to be these:—1st, that if the missionaries are chargeable with the imprudence of abusing the deities, prophets, or religion of the natives, they should be censured, and all practices of that kind restrained; but, secondly, that under colour of preventing such improprieties, all preaching should not be forbidden, especially to those Asiatics who are already Christians; 3dly, that in disapproving and prohibiting the intemperance and indiscretion of

the missionaries, and in guarding against the danger of any popular feeling on the score of religion, the orders be not so given as to indicate hostility to the principle of introducing Christianity; but that, on the contrary, 4thly, the duty of imparting the knowledge of Christianity to the natives, in such manner and measure as may be done without the danger of any political evil, be distinctly recognized.

I could wish that for your fuller information you had all the papers relating to the subject before you, but those from Bengal cannot be sent. The draft we have prepared I think may, and if it come to my hands in time to-day, I will forward it to you in great confidence. In the mean time, I enclose a copy of a short letter, with which it was transmitted to Mr. Dundas.

I hope you, Mrs. W., and all your party, enjoy the cool and tranquil retreat of Barham Court. We are still toiling here in the midst of weather truly Indian. Mrs. Grant and my young people much as usual. The aspect of public affairs is wonderfully improved. It is the Lord's doing, and I trust for good. I remain ever

Your very affectionate

C. GRANT.

P. S. I beg my best respects to Lord Barham. Pray return me the copy of the letter to Mr. Dundas.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed by Mr. Wilberforce—"Dear Stephen, his heart, picture of.")

Serjeants' Inn, July 30, 1808.

My dear Wilberforce,

When you say, "O this bad world," it is not strange that folks like me complain; and yet, on recollection, that O is a sigh for what folks like me are not so apt to sigh for, "sin." To be honest to myself, however, I do grieve for the wickedness of the world, as much as for

its plagues and troubles, though I fear generally with a mixture of bad temper.

I think it is you who have remarked, "if any man doubts the corruption of mankind, let him try to do good, and he will soon be convinced," (perhaps it is, let him try to *be* good; either would be just). I may see the nature and sources of this corruption in a wrong light, but need no proof of its existence. I protest there is some temptation to aim at wrong ends, that one may find "a nail that will drive," and not labour like poor Sisypheus, all one's life long. At least one would be tempted to haul in the oars, and float with the tide, since there is no making way against it.

And yet, my dear W., all this is wrong, and ungrateful, and unmanly, and unchristian. Have we not a gracious Master, who reckons not what we offer in His service but what we aim at, and with what spirit and views? He does not pay us "by the great," as farmers call it (by the piece), and leave us to take all the risk of bad yielding, but counts every lift of the flail. Really, "what wouldst Thou have me to do?" is very often, and may it always be, my anxiety rather than, "what will come of it?" Bad as man is, God can do all the good in the world that He sees fit, with or without our help. He does sometimes graciously permit our right endeavours to succeed. You have had much of such rewards, and even I have had some. If we had more, would it be so well for us? Really, if men could always produce virtue and happiness among their fellow-creatures proportionate to their endeavours, the thing would be so pleasant that it might justly be said, "You have your reward." The wickeder the world the worse for it, but the better perhaps for those who try to mend it, and to mend themselves by it. Let us persist, and God will give us, one of these days, finer tools and better materials. I was in a worse world in the West Indies, and God brought me to England. I thought my new world here bad, and tried, though faintly, alas! to get a little above it, and God brought me into a better one—

into the circle of such people as you and your B., and my dear S., and Babington, &c. &c. Now I shall not be able to mend this world, except in one way, "*fungar vice cotis*." . . . By the way, a hundred observations of the ways of Providence in what the world would call trifling incidents, but which by their actings on the temper and heart are important in the sight of Heaven, have long convinced me that in this new system I am a satellite, not a primary planet, placed in it more for your sakes than my own, though for my own, too, in a subordinate degree. It was otherwise in former situations, and I am often greatly struck with the feeling of this inverted order in the dealings of Providence towards me; though by no means with any sense of discontent; rather curiosity and admiration. I reflect on it with an idea similar to that of Anthony, who said, I think, that his own good genius was always superior to the genii of other men with whom he was conversant, except Octavius, but in the presence of Octavius's genius his own became crest-fallen and subservient. But I must not travel you further at present into my invisible system and providential discoveries, and will only add I am perfectly serious in this parenthesis. . . . I say I shall not be able to make your shoulders a jumping board to something higher; but if, by God's blessing, I could go up with the class, as the very last, or lowest member of it, it will be a great thing indeed, and expecting, as I do, nothing higher in this earthly school of ours, I regard the present form as the shell. When we burst it, the same beneficent Teacher will place us probably in a world where, compared to the present, there will be no propensity to evil, and yet in my, perhaps, unwarrantable speculations, education will not end here. Higher degrees of virtue, purity, wisdom, will still be before us, perhaps in a boundless succession. The conclusion is, "I will endeavour with God's help, to struggle against sin, inward and outward, in this bad world, more than I have ever yet done, with patience and perseverance; and for this, among other reasons, lest I should find

myself hereafter in a different nebula from my dear S. and you.

I remain, my dear W.,
Affectionately yours,
J. STEPHEN.

No answer is desired to this. I was in the humour for such kind of scribbling, and no other, but do not you waste time the same way, I beg.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

East-Bourne, Aug. 2, 1808.

My dear Friend,

I cannot resist the impulse I feel to take up my pen on the spot, after reading your most interesting letter. O thank you, thank you a thousand times; ("friend, dost thou count them?") I really have not had my spirits so elevated since I came to East-Bourne. I have attended you all through your shiftings of the scene, and your sister Sally also; have been with you to church, travelled with you to Weymouth, and rejoiced almost as much as you (not near so much as Patty, who really, besides other gladdening considerations, has I think somewhat of a military turn) over the glories of Sergeant Hill, (how different from Sergeant Kite!) Could I but be affected at the Cheddar feast day? the twentieth anniversary! Can it really be? Then I have been of your party with Malthus, &c. But above all, I have sympathized with you, with him, and with the honest villagers, on Young's return to Blagden—Cicero's from banishment was nothing to it.

But after giving vent to these first ebullitions, (to take my figure from the barrel of brown stout just arrived, and for the same reason,) I must leave you for less acceptable society. Be assured however that if, as you say, you have not for many a day written such a letter, so for many a day neither has any letter given so much pleasure as yours. But now these frothy joys having

fumed away, as South would have said, I really come to some more solid and substantial pleasure. Your mention of the schools being now attended by so many of the children of those who once were scholars, opens a prospect so extensive, and at the same time so delightful, that I cannot yet take my eyes from it. So I trust it will continue to be for generations yet unborn; and that when you and your fellow-labourers are in the world of spirits, you will welcome into the blessed society troop after troop, in long succession, of those who can trace up the work of God in their hearts to *the ladies* at Cheddar, as its spring-head and ultimate fountain.

Poor Addington! and yet you would mischievously check the current of my feelings when in full flow, by your kind memorandum, that the fall you were speaking of was not Lord S.'s fall from power, but his own fall down Lord S.'s stairs. But to be more serious, what a resource does Christianity offer to disappointed men, and yet offer it in vain! How merciful and condescending is our God! willing to take the world's leavings, and to accept those who come to Him (if they will but come) only when they have no where else to go. But I must leave you. As I have gone so far, instead of putting down my sheet, as I had intended, to be finished some leisure quarter of an hour, I'll send it off as it is, to carry the warm impressions of the heart fresh from being taken. I have a whole budget full of matter ready for you, had I but time—but that grows more and more deficient. Farewell, I've told Mrs. W. what a treat I have for her after dinner in your letter. I read it interambulandum by the sea-side. I am ever

Your affectionate and faithful Friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

CHARLES GRANT ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

India House, August 30, 1808.

My dear Sir,

I have written to Mr. Cordiner for information

about the practice of the Dutch government, and of Mr. North. We have in this House a question of nearly the same nature, respecting the temple of Jaggernaut; that is, the Bengal government had interfered in the appointment of its priests and services, but afterwards withdrew from the management of its interior affairs, confining themselves to a tax on pilgrims and regulations of police. In answering their proceedings on this subject, Parry and I propose to tell them that, on principle, it is improper for a Christian government to take upon itself any regulation of Heathen worship—any nomination of priests or direction of their services. The Board of Control will not allow this principle to be brought forward, and are, moreover, for justifying the tax on pilgrims at Jaggernaut, because the Mharattas and Mahomedans levied it. Now they levied it directly as a tax for the privilege of resorting to a place of sanctity. We say that it is improper for us to levy any tax of this nature from heathens, except merely to defray the charge of the police necessary to be maintained in the environs of the temple. I know not how the matter will end. Mr. Dundas is gone to Scotland. I fear Lord Castlereagh will be against us, and also Holford.

I wanted to tell you the *denouement* of the other matter (the answer concerning the missionaries) but time failed. We could get no alteration in the last draft you saw, except one at the suggestion not of either of us but of Mr. Perceval. You will recollect the passage, “we are far from being averse to the introduction of Christianity,” &c.—the sentence now stands thus—“we are anxious it should be distinctly understood that we are from being averse,” &c. We entered a minute on the occasion. It was not intended to be strong, nor to provoke heat or debate; but I hope it contains what is essential, and capable of being turned to account hereafter. I enclose it, begging you will return it. We had hardly closed this business when a new one arrived—a complaint from the Bengal government against Buchanan, for a memorial he delivered there to Lord

Minto. The memorial has the features of Buchanan's other pieces—a good deal of truth, ability, indiscretion, and offensive language. He is come home, and I have told him something of the effect of his writings.

My dear Sir,

Ever affectionately yours,

CHARLES GRANT.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

East-Bourne, Sept. 7, 1808.

My dear Muncaster,

I see you know this coast; that is, all about it probably in the state in which it was before it was made an iron frontier to resist the attacks of our opposite neighbour. Yet, ironed as we are, two or three shabby little privateers, who, as far as we know, had not one cannon among them, came off the coast about a week ago, took four or five vessels close to the land, so near that when one was captured even musketry would have reached them, and hovered for ten or twelve hours so near as would have forfeited them to the Crown under the smuggling acts; yet though we have above 1500 troops, a corps of engineers, a fort that must have cost 200,000 or £300,000, flying artillery, &c. not the hair of the head of a Frenchman was injured, or a feather in his wing discomposed. Where there was a cannon there was no ammunition, where a favourable situation no cannon: the officers were all out of the way, though the affair lasted so long; and as for a ship of war, it was a nondescript. I must say I seldom have been more provoked, than to have thirty or forty poor fellows carried into a French gaol, when the slightest preparation for resistance by those who are paid and maintained for the sole purpose of resistance, would have prevented all the mischief.

But what a gratifying transition across the Bay of Biscay! Most cordially do I congratulate you, my dear Muncaster, on the happy change of affairs in the Spanish

peninsula, and on the glorious achievements of our brave soldiery—to be vainqueur des vainqueurs du monde is a high commendation. What cause have we for thankfulness! I cannot but hope that this humiliation of imperial arrogance is meant for some good issue. I am pressed for time, but I was strongly prompted by your letter, which I have just received, to send you back a few lines. Believe me ever, my dear friend,

Yours most sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

J. BOWDLER, ESQ. JUN. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

25, Lincoln's Inn, Thursday night.

My dear Mr. Wilberforce,

Don't think I mean to dun you with letters and letterlings; but before you leave Eastbourne and get out of my knowledge, I must thank you for the many kind things you have said of me at St. Boniface. They have travelled round (as such matters generally do) and so reached the ear of the person who ought last to hear them; for I must confess I had not firmness enough to hear them without delight, and I am afraid, in such a case, delight is danger. To be sure, I ought to bow, and smile, and excuse myself, and—

“Your friendship, sir, your judgment wronging,
With praises not to me belonging,” &c.

But instead of this pretty coquetry, which only betrays the vanity it would conceal, may I in real simpleness and sincerity of heart request you at once, to increase my obligation for the favour received, and prevent its proving hurtful by conferring another. You will guess what I mean to ask—it is no common thing, and what no common friend ever does—to be told of my faults. I know you would do this without asking, in case of a great offence; but there are a multitude of lesser errors and defects that retard a growth in holiness, and diminish the means of usefulness, which we too generally

overlook in ourselves, and seldom endeavour to correct in our friends. To say that I am conscious of falling continually into these (would I might say only these !) is very common-place humility, but it is true; I have often lamented that so few are willing even to "hint a fault;" and if you will sometimes perform this most friendly office, believe me, whatever may be my unwillingness to improve, I shall at least be grateful for the correction.

How strange and how melancholy it is that we cannot realize, even in a qualified degree, the delightful visions that the imagination so readily bodies forth? When one thinks of a circle of Christians united by mutual affection, animated by the same motives, pressing towards the same object, servants of the same Lord, children of the same Father, we can scarce force from our minds, the idea of the most intimate and endearing communion among them, with perfect openness and confidence. It seems of course that each should be wakefully alive to the imperfections of others as well as to his own, and all grow rich by the bounty of all; a bounty which is twice blessed. But in this sad world—it is needless to shade the picture—there are so few who really like to be told their faults, that nobody cares to do it; the business is so bad that it is gone quite to decay. Do you remember Felicia and Floretta in the Rambler? bosom friends from their youth, till one unhappy day, Felicia said, "My dear Floretta, don't dance next birth-night, you were not successful last year." "Thanks, dearest Felicia,—friendship—sincerity," &c. : but her turn came next: "My dear Felicia, you have one little foible—your voice is weak, and you really should not attempt to sing." What could be so kind, and who so grateful as Felicia? but adieu to affection. All this is against myself, and, perhaps, I should prove like others, yet I would fain try the experiment; I think I could bear reproofs from you, as the veriest cur will take a whipping contentedly from a hand he loves.

I have lately read "Zeal without Innovation," and should like exceedingly to know what you think of it. To me it seems to contain a great deal of very valuable

and original truth ; I read it with great pleasure, and hope it will do much good. Yet I own I was not quite satisfied. The style is at times so defective, that no sense of the importance of the matter can make me quite unobservant of the manner. Sometimes the author labours to write well, and then, like the witling in the "Rape of the Lock," he "dies in metaphor." Sometimes he is so slovenly, that a school-boy would have been flogged for it. And, which is very unaccountable in a man who possesses so very just and clear an understanding, the expressions are continually so obscure, and indeed so inaccurate, that the idea is not brought forth ; one sees what he means to say, but the thought seems to perish in the birth ; and this too frequently where it appears quite inexplicable how he should have missed the right words. I am afraid these defects of manner will prevent the work from being read as widely and admired as much as it deserves ; for in these days of luxury in every thing, neither gods, men, nor book-sellers will endure a bad style. I own, too, (though it argues some presumption in me to judge a writer of so superior an understanding) that I am a little displeased with parts of the work even in their substance ; particularly with the chapter on the faults of evangelical preachers. What he says may be true ; I fear it is true of some among them ; yet surely it is said rather too passionately and without sufficient discrimination. It is somewhat unfair to incorporate men, and then seizing on particular blemishes, affix a bad character to the body. Let men be judged either collectively or singly ; if singly, none can complain ; but if collectively, the utmost you can reasonably claim is to be allowed to state an average ; and I cannot but think the evangelical body would have no reason to fear such a trial. But nothing can be less equitable than to incorporate men for one purpose and then analyse the body for another, the censor having it in his own choice to consider them either separately or collectively. There is too, I think, a slight tendency to another fault, so serious and so common that even an approach to it is alarming. Is not re-

ligion a little too much represented as a matter principally of temporal importance? One hears so much among the common order of preachers about the benefits of Christianity to society, and how it binds men together in a firm compact of confidence, advances the dignity of a nation, &c., and among the high churchmen, of our venerable establishment and the necessity of due subordination, the alliance between Church and State, and that ever beloved thirteenth chapter of the Romans, that one, perhaps, is apt to be a little over-jealous of the true dignity of religion—the blessed seraph that resides

“ Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
That men call earth; and with low-thoughted care
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives
After this mortal change.”

But I am ashamed of having said so much in depreciation of a work entitled to very high praise. I trust and believe that it will diffuse a great deal of valuable knowledge, and thereby tend to soften the bitterness of controversy. The Bishop of London, I hear, says he could subscribe to every word of the work, and my Bath aunt has “no words to express her admiration of the head and heart of the author.” Adieu! this is at least no letterling, and looks like a begging epistle. Yet I really do not expect or wish for a reply unless you happen to have a very idle interval. Believe me, with real affection, your obliged servant and friend,

J. BOWDLER, Jun.

I am afraid my uncle will think you a dangerous visiter at St. Boniface, for you have got possession of my aunt's heart. I believe she is a very pious woman.

WM. HAYLEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

September 14, 1808.

My dear Sir,

Had I the wand of a magician I should be tempted to transport you, and your fair temple of domestic felicity, with all its six delightful columns, flying through the air into my little garden; but not having any magical powers, I must content myself with expressing my regard for you, by a mere compliance with your friendly request, of sending you that epitaph on our favourite Cowper to which I had alluded. I have hitherto kept it in privacy, though it was honoured with commendation by two friends of mine, of very powerful though of very different minds—the bishop of Llandaff and the late Lord Thurlow! With the latter I had a curious correspondence concerning epitaphs on Cowper. His lordship tried to compose one himself for his early associate, but he did not succeed in forming an entire epitaph, though he produced a few good lines, blended with others of an opposite character.

He always indulged me in the privilege (of which I am very tenacious,) “*fari quæ sentiam*,” and I never flattered his politics or his poetry, though I was often charmed with the energy of his intellectual and colloquial powers: but I am giving you too long a preface to a brief composition.

Accept the following, with the cordial benediction of your sincere and affectionate

HERMIT.

REV. MR. STOREY TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Colchester, December 19, 1808.

Dear Sir,

Your kind note, enclosed in Mrs. W.’s letter, demands my grateful and early acknowledgments; and your renewed attention to the subject entered upon at Clapham, and the delicate manner in which you have

introduced it, invites my confidence, and encourages me to write without reserve.

Your annual ten pounds has been chiefly expended in continuing the little school for girls, which your late dear aunt* set on foot near twenty-five years ago, and the same mistress or teacher is still living: what remains has gone to assist the poor.

To your inquiry, of what has been done from another quarter, I must return such an answer as will probably surprise you. Mr. — wrote me a long letter with many apologies, saying he could not afford it, and that he was obliged to withhold his usual donations to the poor of various other places, &c. &c. I was grieved at all this, and knew how sadly many would suffer in various ways, and could not account for the defalcation; but when I read in the papers of “splendid breakfasts,” &c. I said to myself, “surely my friend will find a bank-note for the poor, and no longer plead the want of money;” and impressed with a sense of the inconsistency, I ventured to quote a pious saying of an old and valued friend: “If I do not give more, God will take more away.” It grieved me not a little that I should have occasion for such a quotation.

You know, perhaps, that I entered upon my labours here, under the kind and affectionate patronage of Mr. J. Thornton, who treated me with almost parental consideration, saying to this effect,—“by receiving such company as may wish to come about you, your expenses may rather exceed your income, but never mind that; tell me how you stand at the year’s end, and I will help you out.” This was a most liberal offer, intended to free us from all undue anxiety, of which I never intended to avail myself. But coming down to Colchester the next summer, he asked me what we owed; on replying, very little, he put a red leather purse into my hands, with twenty guineas, and said, if you want more you shall have it. I replied with tears of gratitude “it is enough.” Seeing me delicate in my health, and wanting exercise,

* Sister of John Thornton, Esq.

he afterwards sent me a horse, and now and then inclosed me ten pounds to help to keep it. His son, our M. P., likewise gave me a horse which I now ride. After all the affection and tenderness which I experienced, you will not wonder that the memory of J. Thornton has long been dear to me, and I feel a tender interest in all that concerns the health and comfort of his grandson, and rejoice that he bids fair to tread in his grandfather's steps. * * * *

MRS. H. MORE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, January 4, 1809.

My dear Friend,

Having been long in the expectation of hearing of your arrival at Bath, I had some faint hope that we might have caught a glimpse of you here. The weather, however, has proved such, that I most disinterestedly rejoice in knowing that you are safe at home. With my best love, I congratulate Mrs. W. on the alliance with Mr. Neale, whom I have known and loved ever since he was two years old, though I have now lost sight of him by my total seclusion.

I hope you like your new habitation. I hear it is handsome and comfortable.

Has Hatchard sent you "Cœlebs?" It was lying at Bath for you. The author had hoped completely to escape detection; had neither confidants, counsellors, or critics; of course there are many incorrectnesses. Many people write to me to say they are sure it is mine. H. Thornton assures me it is not; that the author is a clergyman of his acquaintance. Harry, however, is mistaken. "Cœlebs" is mine; hastily (much too hastily) written to amuse the languor of disease. That it will do good I am not sanguine; that I wished to introduce principles into the Circulating Library, which, though quite common-place to the religious, are new to the novel reader, is certain. I know not how it takes in London, for my earnest desire of concealment pre-

vents my making inquiries. I shall be glad to know you do not quite condemn it. By this post, I avow it to Henry only. I desired him to tell you, but think it more friendly to tell you myself, though I am in so much pain I hardly know what I say : I am afraid the sufferings of the body will be seen in the decays of mind in my book. For the last month I have been worse than usual, and when I get an interval of ease in my stomach, I have pains in my teeth and face which almost make me frantic. This has attended my whole illness—now near three years.

I hope all your young ones are thriving. How do you yourself stand this polar winter? Neither P. or I have been outside the door since September : she has been very bad.

I have great delight in Paley's sermons. To me he was clearly a converted man. It was pleasing to see the principles of real religion worked out with his pellucid clearness, and almost without the terms usually employed by older Christians. How I rejoice in these sermons for his own soul's sake! There is so much humility, too, and self-distrust—so unlike his natural character.

We are wild about Spain! I should be more confident of success, did not the Inquisition and Mexico hang over the cause. What a moment is the present! God bless you all!

Yours,

H. M.

RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO WILLIAM
WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Downing Street, May 5, 1809.

Dear Wilberforce,

I am sorry I cannot encourage you to hope for a favourable answer on the subject of your shopkeepers. I shall, however, be glad to see you on Monday, between one and two.

It was mentioned to me last night by a person in the House of Commons, that he thought you had seen the names of the places in which my corrupt practices, through Wellesley's agency, are to be attempted to be charged: if without any breach of confidence you could let me know them, it would at least narrow the field in which I am to hunt for my game; for of course you will easily imagine, that I shall be desirous of anticipating as well as I can, for the purpose of preparation for the day of charge, the nature and quality of the offences for which I am to answer. Corrupt practices comprehend in different minds so many different shades of practice, from direct bribery down to almost the civil expression of the wish of a minister for a man's success, that it is not easy to have a notion of what I am to expect, especially as the more or less of caution with which a secretary of the Treasury may have written his letter, or mentioned one's name, may give the character and colour to a transaction which may be under parliamentary inquiry. And although I certainly am not conscious of having done, in respect of any seat in parliament, any one thing which I should have a hesitation to declare to you in private, at the risk of all that is valuable to me in your good opinion, yet I cannot say that I feel at ease, either with regard to myself or to the public, at the idea that the secretary of the Treasury, who has acted confidentially under me, should be put to the torture of an examination before a committee of the House of Commons, to disclose all the circumstances which he . . either by direct or implied authority from the minister under whom he acted . . may have done, upon which parliament may animadvert, or by which the public may be excited.

I am, dear Wilberforce,

Yours very truly,

SPENCER PERCEVAL.

I shall direct the messenger to wait for an answer to that part of the letter which applies to the names of the places.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD SIDMOUTH.

New Palace Yard Hotel, May 26, 1809.

My dear Lord S.

I wrote part of a letter to you some time ago, and had I not gone out of town during the recess to see my eldest boy, who is with a clergyman in Oxfordshire, I should have travelled to pay my respects to you. I really feel worse than uncivil in never having knocked at your door, but yet I can truly say that the omission has in no degree arisen from any unfriendly cause, but that you and yours have been often in my mind, and that I have inquired about you from time to time of common friends, with the interest of real regard. But my health is not so strong as it used to be, while my business is full as great as ever; so that I am forced to beg a vote of credit from all my friends, for the omission of the ordinary attentions.

I was going yesterday again to take up my pen to finish my long neglected letter, when it occurred to me that you might possibly be disengaged on Monday next, when we have a holiday, and would do me the favour of dining with me at Kensington Gore about five o'clock. You would meet Lord Teignmouth and the Bishop of Salisbury, who is an old friend of mine. I know you do not wish to be treated like a great man, or I should not write to you thus freely. I really should be glad to have some conversation with you on public affairs, which are in a very comfortless state, I fear. I wish, also, to mention to you, that my friend Gisborne will come to town (to me, I mean) in about a fortnight; and that if you would like to know him, I should be very happy to be the instrument of bringing you together. I don't know whether you have heard that the Bishop of Durham offered him a prebend of Durham the other day, which he refused, I own, to my regret.

I beg you will not trouble yourself to write me an answer; but as you ride, and my house at Kensington Gore is close to the park, you can perhaps look in upon

me some day in your *equitation*. I will thank you for a single word verbally, or in writing, to the New Palace Yard Hotel or Kensington Gore, to say if you will dine with me.

I am ever, my dear Lord S.

Very sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MR. PARKER TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed, "Mr. Parker, freeholder—good natured whimsical letter.")

Doctors' Commons, June 1, 1809.

Sir,

The late Dr. Laurence having heard that I had a vote for the county of York, made a very special application to me, on the 2d of June, 1807, to go down to York to vote for Lord Milton; and said that, if I would consent to go, a carriage should be provided, and my expenses paid; to which I replied, that I had promised several friends in the Bank, that if I should go to York I would give you a vote. The learned doctor then said, that should not make any difference if I would go, as you were then so much ahead of Mr. Lascelles, that your election was secure. Accordingly, I went on the third and fourth, and on the fifth voted for you and Lord Milton: having done so, Lord Milton's committee told me, that as I had given you a vote, they could not provide a carriage for me, or pay my expenses back; that if I could not pay my own expenses back, I must apply to your committee: I mentioned it to one of them, but declined making any application for expenses. Carriages being at that time very scarce, I bought a horse, and had a very pleasant ride home, by way of Lancaster, Liverpool, Stafford, Warwick, and Buckingham.

On my return, I told the doctor that he had played a very pretty election trick upon me: he laughed heartily, saying, he hoped the ride would be serviceable to me in my health; and I really think he was right, therefore I

do not complain ; but I told him I would take opportunities to acquaint both you and Lord Milton thereof. I have written Lord Milton to this effect, and now having written so much to you, I have kept my word with the doctor, which I always make a point of doing. Now, all I ask of you is, that you will have the goodness, any open day, to free the enclosed to my tenant on the estate, for which I gave you and Lord Milton each a vote: it is one of the small and most western estates on the border of the county, in the parish of Slaidburn, and within fourteen miles of Lancaster, and hath been in my late father's family above seventy years.

I beg leave to wish you health to enjoy your seat, and that you and Lord Milton may be returned to parliament, at every succeeding election without a contest, and am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. PARKER.

P. S. Should you oblige me herein, I hope you will let a servant send it to the post any day next week, or the following week will answer my purpose.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE HON. JOHN JAY.*

East Bourne, Sussex, August 1, 1809.

My dear Sir,

Though so many years have passed since we saw or heard from each other, I hope I do not deceive myself when I presume that we continue to retain each other in friendly remembrance, not without taking an interest in each other's well being. Such, at least, I can truly declare are my own sentiments and feelings in relation to you; and embracing every opportunity of inquiring after you, I heard with sincere pleasure the other day, from an American acquaintance, that you were living in health and comfort, though retired from public life. But why do I say, though retired, when I

* Formerly American Ambassador in England.

can most sincerely aver, that with a view to health and comfort, and those of mind as well as of body, no situation in life has ever presented itself to my imagination under so hopeful a form as that which my favourite poet describes as

“ Domestic life in rural pleasure passed.”

I forget whether you are a lover of poetry ; if you were so when you were young, I think that even in advanced life, the author of the above line, Cowper, will still be dear to you. His piety gives unfading charms to his compositions.

But I am in danger of expending all the time for which I must venture to detain you, without proceeding to the business which gives me occasion—an occasion which, I own, I am glad to seize—to address you after so long a silence. I am aware, indeed, that your retirement may prevent your taking any part in public life, even in the case I am about to mention ; still your opinion, your good wishes, may be useful to us. Since the Abolition of the slave-trade, an institution has been formed, consisting of a considerable number of the most respectable members of both houses of parliament, as well as of other men of consideration and worth, with the Duke of Gloucester at our head, for the purpose of promoting civilization and improvement in Africa. Of course, all our hopes are grounded and bottomed in the cessation of the slave-trade. Now, from the operation of the war and of other causes, this traffic is stopped, with a very trifling exception, which though trifling, we are trying, and that successfully, to do away throughout all that immense part of the continent of Africa which is north of the Line, and indeed much farther ; unless, as it may be carried on by your countrymen and our own, in direct violation of the laws of both countries. We trust we shall be able, by sending ships of war to scour the coast of Africa, to suppress the British slave-trade ; but this will be of little avail, if the traffic may still be carried on in fact, though prohibited by law, by the American slave-trader ;

nor do I see any prospect of preventing this abuse, unless a convention could be made between the two countries, by which the ships of war of each should be authorized, and even encouraged (by the hopes of gaining by the forfeitures,) to seize and bring in for adjudication the vessels of the other, when prosecuting this unlawful commerce. I rather believe there is another particular, in which it still remains for your country to render its law similar to ours, by subjecting to forfeiture any slave-ship of any country, and under any flag, which is fitted out in and cleared out from an American port. Now, my dear sir, may I hope for your assistance towards the production of the effects I have specified? Knowing to whom I am writing, I will say no more on this head.

I cannot address you without tracing my way to the period when we were last together, through the long and interesting interval which lies between that and the present moment. What events have since happened! What events may take place in the same number of years yet to come! How many whom we loved have gone in the last thirteen years! How many will go in the next! How strongly, my dear Sir, are we admonished to place our happiness on a firmer and more secure basis than it can enjoy in this world, which never more than of late verified the character given of it by one of our greatest and best churchmen, Hooker, that it is full (made up, I think he says) of perturbations. How astonishing is it to see men of penetrating understandings, and of deep and large views, confining their regards to this limited scene, apparently insensible to the existence of any thing beyond it! But I beg pardon for thus running on, and I stop before my pen has got the mastery of me. I will detain you no longer than while I express my hopes that you are well and happy, and assure you that I shall never cease to take an interest in your welfare.

I remain, with respect and regard, my dear Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

East Bourne, August 17, 1809.

My dear Muncaster,

It seems quite barbarous to suffer your affectionate heart to remain distressed with one painful apprehension about me and mine, and therefore, though in a shocking state as to arrears of business, with a list of unanswered letters as long as my arm, &c., I must send you a few lines of friendly remembrance and salutation. We have been at the sea houses all along. I was not aware that you knew East Bourne; when can you have been here? It is a vastly preferable place to Brighton, unless you take in our want of royalty,—a want, however, which I can bear with patience. I thank God, Mrs. W. has profited from our residence here, though not so much as if she had not, from an idea that her children would profit more from her own immediate cognisance, left her governess behind. Really I knew not how much noise six young children can make in a small house, till we were all boxed up under this roof.

I congratulate you on the Spanish victory. Does the Almighty mean to pull down the image he has set up? I have always expected that Buonaparte would, some time or other, be put to confusion by means deemed beforehand very disproportionate to his strength; and that perhaps when at the very climax of his greatness. As for this Austrian war, I don't much relish it. It is so short a time since the ascendancy of the French arms was so complete, as to make the heart of every Austrian soldier . . . the fault probably of the commanders, or at least the officers more than of the men . . . sink within him on the very sight of a French battalion.

Did you see the account of my colleague's great dinner in the newspapers, and a standing committee formed for the preservation of the Whig interest in Yorkshire, especially for insuring its triumph in all elections? It is really curious to see these people such ardent patriots, (only because they were turned out of

office,) that such fellows as we, who never had any connection with office, are treated as a set of place-hunting ragamuffins. I must break off. How time does fly away at these places. Visitors are fewer, however, than common. Two very different M. P's here, Lord Temple and Davies Giddy. With kind remembrances, in which Mrs. W. joins,

I am ever yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A FRIEND.

Near Newport Pagnel, August, 1809.

My dear Sir,

I really was not aware that I was your epistolary debtor, but in truth I have been for eight weeks past doing little else than paying off a heavy arrear of letters. By the way, this great correspondence has been for some time, I had almost said, the sole business of my life. Its size does not arise so much from my having been for many years member for Yorkshire—though that circumstance must doubtless have some effect—but it proceeds from my having been for near thirty years in public life, with the character of not turning a deaf ear to those who state their several sufferings. From whatever cause, however, it proceeds, the effect has become a standing grievance to me, and I have been thinking how to correct it. My friends, according to their different tempers, prescribe different remedies. My spirited and excellent brother, Mr. Stephen, says, "Never answer them." But I cannot bring myself to think that this would be consistent with the courtesy and kindness of Christian demeanour. Henry Thornton, who you know is all over Adam Smith (with one grand exception happily) advises me to assign a certain specified time daily to this employment. But this, without reference to the quantity I have to write, and to my being sometimes so entirely engrossed otherwise for days together, is to apply a standing measure to a

line varying in all degrees from a point to a line almost illimitable. In writing to a friend, we naturally speak of ourselves, which must be my apology for this discussion. Almost as soon as the House rose, I went with my family to East Bourne, where we continued for six weeks; and after spending about a week with our friend Henry Thornton, we came to the village whence I now write to you.

My Irish friend Knox, of whom you must, I think, have heard me speak, passed two days with us at Battersea Rise, with a reverend fellow traveller of his, Mr. Jebb, who has a non-cure in the diocese of Cashel—a man of superior sense, acquirements, and piety. Knox is a wonderful creature, and so eloquent, that you scarcely know how to refuse your assent to the strangest propositions which he pours forth most copiously. His opinions concerning the Roman Catholics you must, I think, have heard me mention. He declares, that he would not wish to convert them, and would by no means attempt it: that the true policy is to quiet them, (how is this to be effected?) and then to grant them all they desire; when after a time improving, as he says they have been, and drawing, as the better disposed of them are, towards the Church of England, he expects that they will come over to our church in a body, and be an acquisition of immense value. The opinion he entertains concerning them, seems to have been produced by his having accustomed himself so much to read the best of their writers—his turn of habits at the same time, and even his health, favouring a contemplative *quietist* sort of life, so that he is become very much of a *Frère Port Royal*.

I hope Mrs. ——'s health is improved. This winter-like summer cannot suit her. For myself I felt a good deal shattered when I got quietly to East Bourne; but living regularly there for several weeks benefited me greatly. Here we seem likely to enjoy more quiet than almost any place we were ever at.

With kindest remembrances, my dear Sir,

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD SIDMOUTH.

Near Newport, Pagnel, August 26, 1809.

My dear Lord Sidmouth,

I have for some time been meditating a letter to Richmond Park, indeed, ever since I received a mark of your friendly remembrance, which, like every other such mark, gave me real pleasure. Perhaps I should have taken up my pen sooner, were it not that, whenever I have thought of actually setting about to write to you, such a spacious field, and so crowded with objects, and need I say, of no inviting or cheering colour, has presented itself to my mental view, as to deter me from carrying my design into execution: and I have now brought myself to persevere, by saying to myself, that I would not close with topics, the nearer you approach to which, the more dark, and difficult, and deformed they appear. Of your speech, I can tell you truly, that I think it breathes the spirit of true patriotism; and I will frankly confess also, that till I read it, the truths which it states had not made a sufficiently deep impression on my mind. Let this effect be general, and your end both in speaking and printing is answered.

I wish I could be alongside of you for a day or two; in the *tête-à-têtes* such a situation would insure, we might open respectively our whole hearts, and heavy hearts I fear they would be. For myself I must say, never was I so deeply impressed with a persuasion of our country's danger, and therefore never before driven so much by the insecurity of all earthly possessions, to seek for that surer inheritance, that more substantial happiness, which is represented to us under the figure of a city which hath foundations, thus most forcibly intimating the baseless nature of the fabrics of this perishing world. Our true policy must doubtless be, to adopt that system which, as you justly suggest, our sagacious enemy, as well as ourselves, may clearly see we shall be able to continue, humanly speaking, interminably. This is what your logicians term, if you will allow a Cambridge man ever to talk of logic, *genus generalissimum*. It must be

followed into its various ramifications, in order to direct us to the right conclusions, concerning both the nature and amount of our naval and military force, of our financial and military operations.

Do you know, if I were with you again, I should probably, partly by look, partly by word of mouth, have hinted to you, that you might once more come into office. I am not in the secrets of any of the present ministry, but I must say (and surely if I have no judgment in these cases, it is not for want of experience, and that under circumstances peculiarly well calculated to render experience available), I see many reasons why the present government must wish for your aid, and I see no reasons, none, I mean, of a public nature, and only one of any kind at all, why you should not be disposed to bestow it. I say this only, that if you should find yourself at any time balancing opposite considerations, with a view to the decision of the practical question I am alluding to, my opinion, be it worth ever so little, may be cast into the right scale. Unless the other have in its weights of which I know and suspect nothing, or the balance itself be untrue, I cannot doubt but that my scale will preponderate. Whether in place or out of it, my dear Lord S., my best wishes will attend you. Before I say farewell, three words, *de re domesticâ*, I hope you are yourself better than you were in the spring, and that Lady S. and your young ones are all well; with that exception, which I need scarcely say is never out of my mind, when I name or think of your family. I thank God we are all well: after having been for six weeks at East Bourne, we are living in a house which a friend, who tried in vain to hire one for me, has kindly lent me. I am very near the haunts of my prime favourite, Cowper. Once more, my dear Lord S., believe me ever,

With cordial esteem and regard,

Most sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

(On the detection and seizure of a slave ship by Mr. Macaulay.)

Near Newport Pagnel, October 19, 1809.

My dear Macaulay,

I am in the state of a full charged bottle of electrical fluid, which wants some conductor to empty itself by. Mrs. W. indeed takes her part in my joy, but I want you, or Stephen, or Babington, or H. Thornton. You really deserve a statue. But more serious and sober matter for rejoicing remains, after the first riotous effervescence has, or rather *shall have*, fumed away, for this is far from being yet the case with me; and with as much sobriety as I can, I compose myself into a grateful acknowledgment of the goodness of Providence, in blessing your endeavours with success. It may be useful to put down exactly the whole story, from the first faint and distant view you had of the thief with scarcely light sufficient to ascertain his substance and features, till this moment, when he is dragged into open day in all his deformity. I am the more glad on account of the effect likely to be produced on the mind of Perceval and his Secretary.

I trust no further difficulties will occur. I should like to see Stephen's face when he first hears of the seizure. Farewell. With kind regards to Mrs. M.,

I am,

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY BANKES, ESQ.

Near Newport Pagnel, Oct. 3, 1809.

My dear Bankes,

I was quite vexed at myself yesterday, for having forgot, if you had seen the same account of the duel between Lord Castlereagh and Canning which

I had, to call upon you to laugh with me on one circumstance ; indeed it is actually true, that when I had read the paragraph I thought of cutting it out and transmitting it to you, lest your paper should be less just to the party concerned. The particular to which I allude, and which made me laugh heartily, was that of Lord ——'s having picked up and carried off one of the pistols, which one of the parties threw away after having fired it, and his gardener the other (like master like man.) I was so forcibly reminded of your successful baiting for Sir W. Pulteney, that you naturally were entitled to a share of my amusement. But you perhaps have not heard as much as I had done of the noble Earl's provident parsimony, which indeed went beyond parsimony, for it not only made him take care of what was his own, but keep a sharp look-out for that which was another's. If this be so, the trait would not delight you as much as it did me.

By the way, my newspaper to-day states so positively that I know not how to doubt its being right, that the duel arose from Canning's having, unknown to Lord Castlereagh, obtained the Duke of Portland's promise, to ask the King to remove him, and having sat with him in Cabinet several months *en ami*, without letting Lord C. know his intentions. I must say, if this be true, as stated, it was monstrous ill usage, and a course of conduct which I can scarcely see how any thing would justify, though I would keep my mind open, till I should have heard what Canning could say in his vindication. Tell me what you know, as far as you are at liberty. Of course I will observe any injunctions of secrecy you may impose. With kind remembrances, I am, my dear B.

Yours ever,
W. WILBERFORCE.

RT. HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

[Docketed, "Pri.—Perceval about my letter to Mr. Jermant.—Ans. Utterly groundless. I only signed, never read letter, but afterwards frankly told him wherein uncivilly—perhaps unkindly treated, &c."]

Downing Street, November 8, 1809.

Dear Wilberforce,

I have received a letter from Mr. George Jermant, desiring me to procure for a young friend of his a commission in the marines. He says in his letter, "I wrote to Mr. Wilberforce, who in a letter from the neighbourhood of Newport Pagnel, just received, says, that circumstances which he will explain when we meet, renders it improper for him to make the application now," with a dash under him and now. I am well aware of your disinclination to make applications to any ministers; I therefore should not have been surprised to have found you had refused making such an application either now or at any time; but I think you will enter into my feelings when I say, that I am by no means easy at finding that there is something at the present moment that makes it improper for you to make the application. I do really believe that if such a feeling had come across you with regard to me, you would have taken the same means, I hope at least you would, of ascertaining whether any thing had unintentionally passed from you to me, as I now do of learning whether any thing has unintentionally passed (as I can assure you most solemnly must have been the case, if it has passed at all) from me to you, which has given you any offence. Pray let me know, with your usual frankness, if it has, and I trust, I shall be able to satisfy you that your impression has proceeded either from mistake on your part, or inadvertence on mine.

I am, dear Wilberforce,

Yours very truly,

S. PERCEVAL.

JOHN JAY, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bedford, 8th November, 1809.

Dear Sir,

On the 28th ult. I received your letter of the 1st of August last, and I thank you for it, and for the pamphlets enclosed with it.

I am well persuaded that your sentiments relative to me are such as you describe ; and I assure you that mine relative to you correspond with them.

The patrons of the abolition act, and of the African Institution, certainly do honour, and will probably do more than ordinary good to Great Britain ; against whom complaints have ascended both from Asia and Africa. It is pleasing to behold a nation assiduously cultivating the arts of peace and humanity in the midst of war, and while strenuously fighting for their all, kindly extending the blessings of Christianity and civilization to distant countries.

That your and our governments should co-operate in rendering their respective laws against the slave trade effectual, is to me very desirable, and I believe that a convention for the purpose would be approved by all, who think and feel as you and I do respecting that base and cruel traffic. Whether the times are propitious to such a convention, is another question. Negotiations are said to be pending between our government and Mr. Jackson. I can discern no objection to his being instructed to propose such a measure. They who offer to do what is fit and right to be done, cannot be losers by it. I can do but little—that little shall be done.

The information you give me respecting your family, and your friendly inquiries concerning mine, gratify me not a little. I rejoice that while perturbation reigns abroad, you enjoy in tranquillity at home the comforts mentioned in the 128th Psalm.

In my family there have been, since the date of my last letter, some painful and some pleasing events. Death has deprived my eldest daughter of an excellent husband, and of the only two children which she had. On the

other hand, my son has gradually recovered his health, and has married an amiable young lady, who, about a year ago, brought him a son. My other children are well, and doing well.

As to myself, sickness confined me to the house last winter, and I am still more of an invalid than a convalescent. However difficult the task, such visitations should be received and borne with grateful, as well as patient resignation.

The observation you cite from Hooker is very just, and so are your remarks on this turbulent and transitory scene. To see things as they are, to estimate them aright, and to act accordingly, is to be wise. But you know, my dear sir, that most men, in order to become wise, have much to unlearn as well as to learn, much to undo as well as to do. The Israelites had little comfort in Egypt, and yet they were not very anxious to go to the promised land. Figuratively speaking, we are all at this day in Egypt, and a prince worse than Pharaoh reigneth in it. Although the prophet "like unto Moses" offers to deliver from bondage, and invites us to prepare and be ready to go with him, under Divine guidance and protection, to the promised land; yet great is the number who prefer remaining in slavery and *dying* in Egypt.

If this letter should reach you, be so good as to let me know it, and name some person in London to whose care I may transmit future ones for you.

With the best wishes for your health and happiness, and with real esteem and regard, I am, dear sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. STEPHEN.

Near Newport Pagnel, Sunday, November 18, 1809.

My dear Sister,

I have taken no notice of the part of your former letter, in which you speak of yourself after the old sort. We will confer on those subjects when we meet; mean-

while be assured that our safety does not vary with our feelings about it. I cannot but think, my dear sister, that you would do well to endeavour to apply to yourself more confidently the promises of the Gospel. Perhaps, I have scarcely said enough to you to enforce this practice. I should have done it more, had I not considered that though you were walking somewhat uncomfortably, yet that you were, I doubted not, walking in the right road, and, therefore, all would soon be well. If even a thousand years are with the Lord as one day, how contemptibly short will the span of human life appear, when it is viewed by those who are enabled to know even as they are known. Yet I own I think this way of going on of yours arises, in a great degree, from your not enough considering the fulness and freeness of the grace of Christ. I find myself continually apt to lose the just impression our minds ought to retain on this head. We ought always to feel as those who, having been justified through the goodness of God through Christ, are assured that God is reconciled to us, if we will but cast ourselves on His mercy, and that He is willing to give us every blessing we can desire. But among these blessings, we ought to remember there are several which may seem likely at the time, at least at first, rather to impair our present comfort than to heighten it. Among these is an increasing tenderness of conscience, an increasing sense of the guilt of sin and of our own sinfulness and weakness. This will, at first, increase our humiliation and contrition, and make it rise at times, even to self-abhorrence; but, blessed be God! there are promises in abundance (and I am sure I say blessed be God for them,) to those who are in this very state of mind: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and will save such as are of a contrite spirit," &c. &c. Even David was instructed to say this (Psalm xxxiv.), but how much more confidently (if we may speak thus, when even David's words were of the Holy Spirit's inspiration) may we assure ourselves of this truth, when we consider the atoning blood of Christ. In this frame and spirit let us cast ourselves at the foot

of the Cross, and assure ourselves of the mercy and loving kindness of Him who has declared "Them that come unto me I will in no wise cast out." Who else are "the poor in spirit," "the lambs, whom Christ will carry in His bosom," but those who feel in this very way?

May you be enabled, my dear sister, to know more of the comfort of Christianity, if it be the will of God; especially since I believe it would probably be effected by your having more just views of the doctrines of the Gospel. However, "The time is short," and "there remaineth a rest for the people of God,"—a rest not from labour only and turmoil, but from disquietude and sorrow. Meanwhile endeavour to look more to the Saviour for every blessing; and "may you be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man," and be more filled by the God of hope with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. Farewell!

I could willingly keep writing on, but even here, I get so little time to myself, (especially time which I can properly apply to religious offices,) that I must not spend even on you the whole of what I greatly want myself. O, my dear sister, what an unspeakable blessing is it, to be disposed to retire from the crowd, and to acquaint ourselves with God, and be at peace. This is your desire also on this blessed day, and it is, we are authorized to say, "The work of God!" We are even taught and enjoined to regard it in that light. Let us then praise God for the disposition, and be assured that it is only a specimen, and an earnest and pledge of His general inclinations towards us. It is because He loves us, that He has done this for us, and He will do greater things than this. We wrong His loving kindness alike and our own comfort. But I should never have done if I were not to check myself. May we, my dear sister, I would humbly hope, join in glory, in praising the goodness of our God and Saviour!

Affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THOMAS BABINGTON, ESQ.

London, November 20, 1809.

My dear Tom,

I have kept out of, or rather I have not been forward in getting into, the way of my political friends; and I am at this moment a little discomposed by a very friendly invitation from Perceval, to fix a day for dining with him. Stephen sent me an account of the part Perceval had taken in the late Cabinet broils, and I really thought that no blame was imputable to him. He never knew of the intrigues for turning out Castlereagh till after parliament had risen, when... conceiving that the consequence of Castlereagh's being made acquainted with what was depending would be his immediate resignation, which, as the expedition was on the point of sailing, he conceived would be highly injurious to the public; under these peculiar circumstances... he became party to the concealment, until the expedition should have come to some issue. He declared however formally in a letter to the Duke of Portland, against the concealment which had been practised. I own that as far as Castlereagh is concerned, I think Canning has made almost a satisfactory defence; but the reflection which forces itself on my mind throughout the whole transaction is, that the public interest seems to have been forgotten by almost all parties.

I really felt a good deal for Castlereagh, till I found that the challenge was sent, not, as I had conceived, from the impulse of the first angry feelings, but after having chewed the cud of his resentment for twelve days. This, with the consideration that in that time he must have learned that Canning was not so much in fault as others as to the concealment, makes the challenge appear a cold-blooded measure of deliberate revenge, prompted by the resentment arising from Canning's having shown, that he thought lightly of his talents and powers, and thereby degraded him in the public estimation. The duel was evidently in part the expres-

sion of this revengeful anger ; in part, an expedient for restoring him in some degree to his level, and putting him in good humour with himself, as a man who had obtained satisfaction for the insult.

As for the present government : the King by our constitution has a right to appoint his ministers ; and if the Walcheren, and even far more the Spanish, expedition are put out of the question, I see nothing in the Cabinet, such as it now is, which forbids its being entitled to a fair measure of parliamentary confidence. I can truly say that, Earl Grey only excepted, I think these men superior in ministerial talents to the other set. Grenville, though an excellent second, is not a sound-headed man, and he is very obstinate. Windham is certainly a drawback from the value of any ministry, unless he can be kept in order. Earl Grey I value very highly indeed as a public man. Now take the present set. Perceval, Wellesley, Lord Liverpool, Ryder, are really all sensible men ; and of Perceval, with all his faults, I think better than of any of the rest. But they will greatly want parliamentary speakers ; and yet it is sad work that we should take measure by the false standard of oratory, as to the fitness of men for ministerial situations : it was excusable in the commonalty of Athens, but is scarcely so in the British House of Commons.

But I must say two things before I conclude. First, if Perceval deemed it material for the public weal that there should be a mitigation of our parliamentary contentions, and all the other benefits of a broad-bottomed administration, the junction ought to have been proposed to Lords Grenville and Grey in the mode most likely to insure the acceptance of the proposal, that is, it ought to have been made by the King himself personally. I am persuaded that the King might have prevailed on them to unite. I even hold that they could not have accepted the offer as it was made, without appearing too eager to get into office. Yet I have never doubted for a moment Perceval's sincerity in his offer to the two Lords. His eminence was not of his own seeking. Secondly, if the regular opposition (excluding the democrats) would consent to abstain from systematic oppo-

sition on the declared ground, that the public danger is such as to call on us to dismiss all party objections and hostilities for a time, I should prefer it greatly to a coalition. Coalitions are odious things, and lead to the dissolution of all principle, and the loss of all credit, in public men; and surely it is a shame that it should be necessary to bribe men by the offer of good places to wave their party altercations. But satis disputavi. Farewell. With kindest remembrances,

Ever affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE HON. JOHN JAY.

Kensington Gore, near London, July 10, 1810.

My dear Sir,

Calling to mind the friendly spirit which animates your letters to me, I am not ashamed of being deemed impertinently selfish, when I commence my reply to your last very obliging communication of November, 1809, by telling you that about a year and three quarters ago I changed my residence, and found myself in the habitation which my family now occupies, and which we find more salubrious than Clapham Common. We are just one mile from the turnpike gate at Hyde Park corner, which I think you will not have forgotten yet, having about three acres of pleasure ground around my house, or rather behind it, and several old trees, walnut and mulberry, of thick foliage. I can sit and read under their shade, which I delight in doing, with as much admiration of the beauties of nature (remembering at the same time the words of my favourite poet: "Nature is but a name for an effect, whose cause is God,") as if I were two hundred miles from the great city.

My parliamentary duties force me to be within easy reach of London all the winter, and even spring, and sometimes for a part of the summer. I have a very affectionate wife, who is always unwilling to be at a distance from me: and Providence has blest us with six

children, the eldest of whom is not quite twelve, the youngest under two years of age. My family are breathing pure air, and taking exercise quietly and without restraint, while I am in the harness at St. Stephen's, or, to continue the metaphor, in a very good stable just opposite Westminster Hall, where I commonly, or, rather chiefly, take both my food and rest during the whole session,—often being unable to come over to Kensington Gore from Monday morning to Saturday night;—always, however, within call, should domestic matters require my presence. I was not aware that my egotism would be so tedious, yet again let me confess that I am not afraid of subjecting myself, with you, to any severity of censure. When I have a regard for any one, I like to know his habits of life, times, places, &c.; and I recollect with pleasure that you kindly gave me an account of your family matters, and of your present situation and pursuits. Let me beg of you to be so obliging as to continue so to do, in any letter which you may do me the favour to write: next, let me not forget to inform you, that your friendly packet of the 8th of November last, of which I received duplicates first, brought me two copies of your favour of April 14, 1806; for which, however late, accept my best thanks. In conformity with the kind wish you express, that I should name to you some person in London to whom your letters may be addressed, let me name Robert Barclay, Esq. (the great brewer,) or Samuel Hoare, Esq. (the banker,) both of whom I think you know.

I wish I could recollect, with certainty, how many of the reports of the African Institution I sent you. I will, however, transmit to you either to New York or Philadelphia, accordingly as on inquiry I shall judge best, all the reports but the first. Indeed, on consideration, I will send them all, as you may promote our common object, by giving away any copies you do not wish to retain.

I am grieved to tell you that both your countrymen and my own are still carrying on the abominable traffic in human flesh, in spite of the abolition laws of their

respective countries. I trust that a continuance of the vigorous methods we are using to carry our laws into effect, will by degrees force our commercial men to employ their substance in some more innocent commerce. It has given me no little pleasure, to find all your several ministers (both Mr. King, Mr. Monroe, and Mr. Pinckney) warmly disposed to co-operate, so far as they properly could in their peculiar situation; and I am not without hopes of a practical, though not a formal adoption of the only effectual expedient for suppressing the slave trade, that of the armed vessels of both our countries taking the slave ships of the other as well as those of its own. There might be objections, though I own I can see none of sufficient importance to outweigh the countervailing benefits to a regular compact between our two countries for the above purpose; but it will answer the same end, provided we respectively abstain from claiming any of our vessels which may have been captured when engaged in the slave trade. I have received, within a few weeks, the opinion of your attorney-general, in its practical tendency in favour of the system I am wishing to see established.

My dear sir, I know not how I have been able, with the pen in my hand, to abstain so long from expressing the sincere and great pleasure it has given me to find affairs taking a more favourable turn between our two countries. I can only account for my not breaking out on this topic, on my first sitting down to write to you, by the consideration that when once there is a favourable issue in any case, in which we have been receiving or communicating, from time to time, the tidings of the day, with extreme anxiety and earnestness (the French word *empressement* better expresses what I mean) as, for instance, in the case of the illness of a friend, we become so cool that we perhaps forget to inquire about, or to name at all the very topic on which, during the state of suspense, we were continually asking for or giving intelligence with such feverish solicitude. Really, the idea of a war between our two countries is perfectly horrible; and I am happy to say, that I think, in this country,

this most just sentiment gains ground. Like all propositions which are founded in truth and reason, it gradually sinks into the minds of men, and, though perhaps slowly and insensibly, by degrees it leavens nearly the whole mass. It will tend to produce this friendly disposition on your side of the water, if more of your countrymen would come over and live awhile among us. We are an idle people; we are a busy people, and may not have leisure or disposition to pay all the personal attention which politeness might prescribe; but I am persuaded that any gentleman of character and moderation, who should visit this country, would meet with such a friendly reception as would show him that the circumstances of our being the descendants of common progenitors is not forgotten, or rather, that it is reviving and diffusing itself with increasing force.

Before I conclude, let me express the satisfaction it gave me to find that you were safely laid up, if I may so express it, in a comfortable and tranquil harbour, after having, figuratively as well as literally, been so long, or at least so often, tossed on the sea of public life. May I confess to you, at very near fifty-one only in years, but with only a weak constitution, and after having been in parliament very near thirty years, that I begin to look forward to the same secession from public life; meaning, however, to form no positive determination for the future, but to follow the leadings of Providence, and do on the day the duties of the day.

In three or four years, my four boys, the eldest especially, will be attaining that period of life when a father's eye and tongue may be most useful and necessary to their future well doing; and really the business of parliament has increased so much of late years, as to render it next to impossible for any man who cannot live for six or seven months, in every year, with a very small proportion of food or sleep, especially the latter, to attend at all as he would otherwise be glad to do, to domestic or social claims. Then let me add,—and if

you take it as intended in the way of a hint to yourself, excuse only my freedom in giving it, and you will not greatly mistake my meaning: any man, who has acted his part at all creditably on the stage of public life, may render very great service to mankind, especially to his own countrymen, with whose opinions, prejudices, and errors he is well acquainted, by his pen; for instance, by bearing testimony to the truth of the position, which, however trite, it is still useful now and then, to repeat and enforce, that "honesty is the best policy," &c.

I happen to have just now many claims of an epistolary nature, which have been too long neglected, owing to my having left them, as in your case, to be attended to when the recess of parliament should afford me a little more leisure. Much writing also affects my breathing. I must therefore conclude. But before I lay down my pen, let me, recollecting your kindly opening your mind to me on one important occasion, in I think 1795 (or 1796), beg that when you next write to me, you would favour me by telling me how you would vote, &c., if you were in our House of Commons on the question of parliamentary reform. I do not ask you to take the trouble of entering into a detailed statement of the premises which may lead you to form your judgment on that point, whatever it may be; I wish only (unless you have a little leisure) for your conclusion. I will own to you, that one main motive with me for having supported, on a late occasion, the motion for parliamentary reform, was the persuasion that by taking away what must be confessed to be a blemish or blot, in an assembly which is professedly formed on the principle of representation, we are lessening the power of bad men to misrepresent and defame our constitution, and to mislead the well-intentioned, but perhaps less acute and long-sighted, into a concurrence in their measures. Secondly, if the measure should be adopted at all, it is desirable that it should be so at a time when, as it is really the case now, notwithstanding the confident assurance of such men as Cobbett and his adherents, the country feels coolly on the subject, and is therefore not likely to push its repre-

sentatives to go dangerous lengths; for I think you will agree with me that it is a species of reform, all things considered, concerning which, in this country and at this time, it is better of the two not to go quite far enough than to go too far.

Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me, with cordial esteem and regard,

Your faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. As I shall be sending you a parcel, and I do not recollect that I ever begged your acceptance of a religious publication, which I first sent into the world the year I married (and what I say of wedded life, I thank Heaven I should not now alter), let me now transmit it as a testimony of my esteem and regard. It was, in truth, principally intended for the use of my friends; I therefore may send it to you with great propriety. I will also accompany it with another on the slave trade. May these books preserve in your family the memorial of our friendly connection; and, if you will not call me impertinent, I will request from you some similar memorial.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Herstmonceux, near Battel, Sept. 25, 1810.

My dear Muncaster,

I cannot be sure whether or not I have written to you within the last fortnight or three weeks. If not, you will scarcely be able to make out my lurking-hole. How much will you be surprised when I go on to tell you, that I am within a very few miles of the tremendous John Fuller. It must surely be a strange wild region that contains such inhabitants; some outlandish place beyond the bounds of civilized society, where "sea-monsters whelp and stable." Indeed, were not Mr. Speaker at a distance but little greater, I should scarcely feel secure within the reach of such a barbarian.

But as it is said, that the fiercest animals feel an unextinguishable dread of the keeper who has once established his ascendancy over them, so I trust to the effect of the recollection of the great wig, and repose in security. To explain—I am in a corner of Sussex, in an excellent house lent me by a kind friend, who from family circumstances is kept away from it some weeks longer: and in a place almost as pretty as the neighbourhood of the sea ever is. Not that it is so near the salt water or so beautiful as Muncaster. There is a fine old castle here; a mere *novus homo*, however, compared with yours, having been built in Henry 6th's time, but it was in complete preservation till about twenty years ago; and though this is a very good private gentleman's habitation, yet when one sets it against a complete castle, one side of which was 200 feet long, and which was in the complete costume of the age in which it was reared, it dwindles into as much insignificance, as one of the armed knights of the middle ages, fully accoutred, who should suddenly be transformed into the curtailed dimensions of one of the box lobby loungers of the Opera, or even one of the cropped and docked troopers of some of our modern regiments. We have been here about three weeks; and I am striving to spend less time at my desk, both on account of my health, and that I may, when alone it is in my power, have a little time for reading to my wife and children. I wish you and yours could be of the party. But I can only wish it.

Accustomed as I am to all the conveniences of a highly civilized state of society, I cannot without wonder as well as thankfulness call to mind, that here I am at one extreme of the kingdom writing to you in the other, and not doubting of conveying to you very speedily the tidings of me and mine, and of receiving from you the account of your goings-on, though secured behind the natural rampart of your ninefold wall of mountains. O my dear Muncaster, we are not, I am sure I feel it continually, we are not half grateful enough for the blessings with which we are favoured; above all, for the spiritual blessings. I cannot help at times,

giving way I will not say, but, at least, lending an ear to suggestions which arise in my mind, that our comforts will be abridged, and our pride be humbled. But I will abstain from striking this string, at least at present. Let me not excite melancholy ideas in your mind. If I cannot be gay, let me at least be affectionate, and assure you, with kind remembrances to your young ladies, in which Mrs. W. would join if she knew of my writing, that I am ever, my dear Muncaster.

Yours most sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Herstmonceux, Oct. 23, 1810.

You amused me, my dear Muncaster, by showing yourself at least as well acquainted with this place and its environs, as I was after residing here a month. You are right, at least substantially so; the castle is in the park, but, *horrendum dictu!* it was pulled down, and the bare walls and ivy-mantled towers alone left standing; the materials being applied to the construction of a new house, which on the whole cost twice as much, I understand, as it would have taken to make the castle habitable, for it had fallen a little into arrears. I don't know however that we who inhabit the new mansion may not have made a good exchange by gaining in comfort what is lost in magnificence; for the old building was of such a prodigious extent, that it would have required the contents of almost a whole colliery to keep it warm; and I think few things are more wretched, (of the kind I mean,) than living in a house which it is beyond the powers of the fortune to keep in order; like a great body with a languid circulation, all is cold and comfortless.

I see from the newspapers, that the Duke of Norfolk has been in your part of the world. Has he not been in your old castle? Not that you would much covet his

visit. There is a strange anomaly, an utter unsuitableness, between Jockey of Norfolk and the peaceful dales of Westmoreland, the seats of peace, and love, and melody, which he would people with the throng of the vassailers in Comus. I hope that you yourself are enjoying the witcheries of your fascinating prospects. I quite long to revisit those much-loved valleys, and rocks, and lakes, and waterfalls. I think the longing has been increased by the perusal of the *Lady of the Lake*, which I have read with delight and wonder. I really think that from the place where Fitz-James first lights on the mountaineer, to the end of the battle, there has not often been a more spirited and interesting poem.

My dear Muncaster, your kind heart will be sorry to hear that my friend Bowdler is going abroad for a milder climate, but we greatly fear too late. But for my being married, I have thought that I would go as his companion. He is really, take him all together, one of the most extraordinary young men I ever knew. If it should please God to restore him to health sufficient to enable him to carry on his profession, this will one day appear. But to those who love him as well as I do, it is an unspeakable comfort to reflect that he is, I believe, perfectly ready to make the great exchange. I often think what a change it is! what astonishment will seize the minds of those whose thoughts have here been studiously turned away from all such serious subjects! My dear Muncaster, may we also be ready. My heart is very heavy. I know you will sympathize with me. God bless you and yours.

I am ever affectionately yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE REV. JOHN VENN.

My dear Sir,

We are here in full force, and I should be ashamed of pouring into a friend's house thus *en masse*, if I were not really conscious that I should like to receive, as well

as to pay, such a visit : for instance, it would give me real pleasure to receive under my roof yourself, and sister, and all your descendants. The present age . . . though I must confess it has improved in that part of *savoir vivre* which respects the treatment of inmates, for nothing could be so annoying as the old-fashioned doing of the honours of the house to your guests, *ab ovo usque ad poma*, that is, from the waiting breakfast for them in the morning, to the lighting of them up into their bedrooms at night . . . yet it is a far less hospitable age than the last. The very construction of our houses is a proof of it ; and it is but a bad change that has been made of all the queer little in and out closets (which would hold, however, a bed each,) of our forefathers, for the splendid drawing rooms of our own times.

But I must break off, though I could gladly go on chatting ; and I should have much to say of young Mr. S. who is staying here. How delightful it is to see persons thus setting themselves in early life to obtain eternal glory. S. seems a man of talents as well as of elegant and pleasing manners, and of a glowing spirit. He is disposed, *entre nous*, to go anywhere as a missionary, but really considering how little, to use Soame Jenyns's antithesis, "how little this Christian nation is indeed a nation of Christians" . . . which some future Bentley will restore to the genuine reading, by suggesting that it was originally "how little this Christian nation is a nation of Christians indeed," i. e. of *re verâ* Christians . . . considering this, I say, I greatly doubt whether such a young man might not probably be more useful in his own country than in any other. Do give me your opinion. To be sure it is much, and it is rare, to find the real *vivida vis animi*, which renders a man decided to go anywhere to preach the glad tidings of salvation through a Redeemer, and at the same time, to preach a plain practical doctrine of the true apostolic standard. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me ever most affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JOHN JAY TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bedford, 25th October, 1810.

Dear Sir,

On the 13th instant I received and read with great pleasure your interesting and friendly letter of the 18th July last. There are several topics in it on which I should like to *converse* with you; they shall be noticed in some future letters. As I cannot write or read much at a time without fatigue, I shall confine myself at present to the one on which you express a wish to know my sentiments.

A satisfactory answer to the question of "REFORM," can only result from a judicious selection and combination of the reasons and circumstances which bear relation to it. Of many of these my information is so imperfect, as that it would be rash to form a decided judgment. I have not sufficient *data* whereon to calculate, whether so much good may reasonably be expected from such a measure, as would justify the risk of inconveniences to which every important innovation is more or less liable.

The principles of the English constitution appear to require that the whole number of representatives should be fairly apportioned among the whole number of electors. But I have observed nothing in it which even implies what is called "universal suffrage." It is not a new remark, that they who own the country are the most fit persons to participate in the government of it. This remark, with certain restrictions and exceptions, has force in it; and applies both to the *elected* and the *electors*, though with most force to the *former*.

I do not know what the proposed plan of reform *precisely* is. If it be only to apportion the representatives among the counties, or other convenient election districts, whether now existing, or to be instituted, according to the number of their respective electors, I should consider it as being a just and constitutional measure, and should adopt it, unless some existing or impending circumstances should render it unreasonable.

I am the more inclined to this opinion by the present state of your aristocracy, which is such, as not unnaturally to excite a jealousy that it will obtain, if it has not already obtained, an undue ascendancy. The French revolution has so discredited democracy, and it has so few influential advocates in Europe, that I doubt its giving you much more trouble. On the contrary, there seems to be a danger of its depreciating too much. Without a portion of it there can be no free government. What that portion should be in England, is a question to which your constitution affords, in my opinion, the best answer. To preserve balances in times like these, is difficult; mere palliative *pro hac vice* expedients seldom produce durable good. They so frequently violate sound established principles, as rarely to prevent more trouble than they cause. The fluctuation of human affairs occasionally imposes changes on nations as well as on individuals, to which they find it necessary and prudent to accommodate, by corresponding or by countervailing changes. These, if made considerately and in season, generally conduce to security and order. Whether, during the rage and range of democracy, your aristocracy received greater accessions of strength than the public safety and sound policy required, I do not know. There seems, however, to be reason to apprehend, that when things return to a calm and settled course, the commons will feel the influence of the lords out of doors, and consequently within doors, in a greater degree than the constitution allows. If so, that consideration becomes an argument in favour of the proposed "reform."

I will add an observation which strikes me as having weight. Some of the boroughs appear to have degenerated into a mere mean, by which opulent political leaders supply themselves with able and active partisans and advocates. These, although received in parliament as members, are in fact and truth the representatives of their employers, and not of the nation. It must be admitted that these employers have often taken into their service men of great talents, and in many instances, of great worth. Wise and good borough-holders, like wise

and good kings, doubtless wish and endeavour to make the best appointments ; but ought either borough-holders or kings to appoint representatives for the nation ?

With great esteem and regard, and the best wishes for the prosperity of yourself and family,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and faithful servant,

JOHN JAY.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE RIGHT HON. JOHN SMYTH.

Herstmonceux, near Battel, November 6, 1810.

My dear Smyth,

Though I were to abstain from taking up my pen, you would give me credit, I trust, for thinking of you and sympathizing with you on the late afflicting event, which the newspapers notified to me, but to which I feared but too much credit was due, remembering the apprehensions you had expressed in the summer. But though, as I have already said, you would make sure of my sympathy were I to remain silent, it affords a sort of melancholy pleasure both to give and to receive the assurances of our taking a friendly interest in the sorrows of those we love ; and it is partly to send you this assurance that I now write to you. From the strain of your last highly interesting letter, the melancholy close of your long course of anxiety would find you, I trust, in a state to profit from it—I say to profit—for it is an opinion formed after much observation, that we are either the better or the worse for all such visitations—they scarcely ever leave us where they find us. I have known several instances in which they have been the means of a permanent change for the better in the character ; and as we are expressly told in the Scriptures that the dispensations of the Almighty are designed with the gracious purpose of improving our moral condition, we ought, on all such occasions, to make it our deliberate care and earnest endeavour, that

the intentions of Heaven, if I may so express myself, are not disappointed, but that they may produce the intended effects.

People who have any sense of religion at all, appear for the most part to bear this class of afflictive visitations with more resignation than might be expected. I think this arises in part from their being such as come manifestly from above;—not like the misfortunes which we can trace to the injustice or ingratitude of men;—they are such also as we cannot resist or control. We cannot help ourselves, if I may so express it. But here they commonly stop; forgetting that by such strokes, they are called upon not only to suffer, but to do. Here, as in almost every other instance, the error, and consequently the fault, arises chiefly from their ignorance of the Word of God. O how extensively applicable will be found at the last day this crime of neglecting the Scriptures, even by those who acknowledge their authenticity and authority! But I must check the disposition I feel to pursue this train of thought much farther. Yet let me resume it for a few minutes. The improvement to be derived from such domestic losses is no way difficult to discover: but here, as in other cases, where we are ignorant of our being diseased, we do not apply for the remedy, though were we to apply, an infallible remedy is at hand. People too often think they only need improvement, when in reality they want a radical reform, (a phrase which I like as much in a religious, as I abhor it in a political sense); they require the completion of that great change of which our Saviour and His apostles speak so often and so forcibly, under the expressions of putting off the old and putting on the new man—of becoming a new creature, &c. &c. In such afflictive dispensations as that which you have lately experienced, we are called upon to “consider our ways,” to examine “whether we are in the faith,” to ascertain whether we are prepared for that future state, for which it is the great object of Christianity to fit us.

I wish you would read carefully and consider what

must be the real meaning of that striking part of our Saviour's address to the Church of Laodicea, in the third chapter of the Revelations, "Behold I stand at the door and knock," &c. Then whether we have all our work to begin, or whether we have begun and have to carry it on farther, or like the Laodiceans have to recover from a state of declension, the process is the same; and I know nowhere that it is so well described as in my favourite volume Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*. We must pray more earnestly; we must read the Scriptures more diligently, those parts of them especially which more peculiarly suit our case, we must endeavour by meditation and prayer to strengthen our impression of invisible things, and to obtain a larger measure of that Holy Spirit which is promised to all who earnestly seek it with penitence and faith. Of course I consider as combined with all this, constant self-examination, and watchfulness over our hearts and lives, that not our conduct only, but our thoughts and affections may be such as will be well pleasing to God. It is in this way, my dear friend, that the character is to be formed which is spoken of in Holy Scripture in the exalted terms of "being made meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light;" and it is, indeed, a blessed consideration in this case only, if we do strive in earnest we cannot but succeed. As sure as the Almighty is a God of truth, so sure may we be, that He will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask him. There is scarcely any thing more remarkable than the difficulty with which we give credit to these declarations of the divine mercy; and though this may sometimes proceed from humility, as it would almost always excuse itself under that guise, it is more commonly the result of unbelief. I know nothing which has ever impressed on my mind more powerfully the infinite condescension of God, than that for the purpose of providing against this diffidence of ours, (for the Scriptures throughout discover a thorough acquaintance with our natural character,) He has even vouchsafed to confirm this often-repeated declaration by an oath,—I think, in the 6th chap. of Hebrews, but have

not time to look. Of the argument, however, and intention, I am sure, for it is a source of deep consolation to my own mind; as it is said, "That they might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us."

My dear friend, I am persuaded I need not apologize to you for thus pouring out the fulness of a heart which is deeply interested for your happiness, and which, to its earnest wishes, joins its cordial prayers, that you may partake largely of all those never-ending blessings which are prepared for such as seek them in the way which the word of God points out. I was going to lay down the pen, but one thought more occurs to me, which I should be sorry to omit: I was looking the other day into the preface of a publication of Mr. Fellowes, and to my wonder I saw that he recommended it to people to confine their reading chiefly to the Gospels and to neglect the Epistles, more especially those of St. Paul. If he had said just the contrary, he would have done very wrong, but really I should have thought him far more reasonable, considering that St. Paul was commissioned by our Saviour himself to preach the Gospel, and to enlighten, &c., the Gentiles:—"Unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes," &c., (Acts xxvi.):—Paul's Speech before Festus and Agrippa. Do look at the passage. Now how astonishing, that any one professing to believe this to be the word of God, should yet say that St. Paul is the very teacher to whom we ought not to listen! Farewell, my dear friend! May every blessing attend you and yours here and hereafter!—so heartily exclaims

Your faithful friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

I am going to London (Kensington Gore) in two or three days. Kind remembrances to your daughter. I hope your eldest son and his lady are well. I fear I am scarcely legible. It is owing to my being conscious that, if my hand did not gallop it could not get to its journey's end. Here they come for my letters:—well saved.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

London, March 12, 1811.

My dear Muncaster,

How strange it is that the very letter from you which I have suffered, I fear, to lie in my writing-box unanswered for two or three weeks, should be one which was the effusion of your warmest feelings, and which produced kindred emotions in my heart, just as if it had been so little interesting as to have escaped my recollection altogether; but the truth is, that my delaying to write to you has arisen from the precisely opposite cause; for really the state of mind in which I felt myself was so uncongenial with inclosure bills and turn-pike-roads-renewal acts, that I could not proceed without violence to my feelings in the midst of all the hurly burly of my Palace Yard life. Some time has now passed away, and how wonderfully does time deaden the sensibility of our emotions! Few things have struck me more, than that those who filled the largest space in the eyes of men appear to be very soon forgotten.

But, my dear Muncaster, I must not forget to notice one sentiment in your letter: you say you have long ceased to be concerned for those who are taken away; that you rather, on the contrary, envy their lot, &c. Now, without applying your words to any particular person, much less to our lately deceased friend, of whom I assure you I thought more favourably than of people in general, we ought to remember, my dear Muncaster, both for ourselves and for others, that to die, to quit this perishing world, and enter on a state of never-changing existence—of existence, too, either exquisitely happy, or exquisitely miserable—is, indeed, an awful event: as, also, that there must be a certain preparation of heart and character before any one can be admitted into the state of bliss; therefore, unless this character really seems to be formed, it is surely the kindest thing we can do to urge those whom we love to apply in earnest to that work, to which none who apply in earnest will

apply in vain. On these grounds, I have often blamed myself for not asking you what religious books you had prevailed on an old friend of ours to read, or have read to him. . . .

But, my dear Muncaster, I have been running on strangely; you like, however, I know, that I should

———"pour forth all my soul as plain
As downright Shippen or as old Montaigne;"

and therefore I shall not apologize: but I will now lay down my pen, first asking when you think of coming up to London again. You will forget the way to the House of Commons. How are your daughters going on? Did you know that I had lost a steady and most active friend at Leeds, Mr. Cookson, a man of most extraordinary powers. Nothing could be more honourable than the whole of his conduct towards me; nothing more disinterested.

I thank God we are all pretty well, though Mrs. W. has had a bad cold; they have been almost general hereabouts. Farewell, my dear Muncaster, and believe me,

Ever most sincerely yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

July 26, 1811.

My dear Wilberforce,

The question* you speak of is one I have thought and shall think very much about; but the reasons on both sides are painfully important, and such as do not well admit of being fairly poised against each other. As to the intellectual decay, I am disposed to say that it is not real; I never heard you speak better than the last time, pitch of voice excepted; and I think you are better and better *heard* there, in the parliamentary sense

* Mr. Wilberforce's standing again for Yorkshire.

of the word. Your great defect always has been want of preparation in cases that demand, and,—with those who do not know your habits,—raise the expectation of it. No man does so little justice to his own powers. That you stand so high as you do, is because you could stand much higher if you would, *i. e.* if you could and would take time to arrange your matter. At the same time I do think your faculties, in one respect, are the worse for wear; I mean your memory. I perceive it to decline even as fast as my own, and that is a bold word. Yet were I continually hurried as you are, I could remember nothing and do nothing.

We are, however, to recollect that the question is not merely what you are, but what you are likely to continue to be for some years; and in this view I am by no means clear that the rule *solve senescentem* is not applicable in the case supposed. I lament, my dear Wilberforce, to say, that of late I have at times seen or conceived I saw symptoms of deterioration in your bodily appearance, as if you were getting old faster than I could wish, or rather losing the promise of long abiding strength; but in this one is apt to deceive one's self, and be the dupe of one's own apprehensions. Your spirits, too, I have thought not uniformly so high and so long on the wing as they used to be.

If I could persuade you to think as I and others do respecting the duties of parliamentary life, I should have much less difficulty on this question. If you could be content with a very limited attendance, coming down only on special or important occasions, and leaving the ordinary business of the house to younger and stronger men, you might do much good there without hurting yourself, or neglecting your private duties. I can by no means admit that it is every man's duty to attend every sitting of the house, and that a man has no right to accept a seat unless he is to take part in every deliberation, or vote on every question. You yourself make exceptions for lawyers and men in public offices which call them elsewhere, and why not for men who are infirm, or who have private duties, or important

public labours of a voluntary and gratuitous kind which demand their time at their desks or elsewhere out of the house? If you were digesting information, preparing papers, concerting measures, &c. for the promotion of great public objects out of the house, how directly might it minister to your usefulness when in it. But if very frequent non-attendance were to be the result of private occupations alone, what then? Is a representative unfaithful, or does he serve his country ill because he does not give all his time to political labours during the enormous portion of the year now occupied by a session? Then let celibacy be a qualification for parliament as well as for the popish priesthood. A man has no right to be a husband and a father unless he will give to those relations an adequate portion of his time. A professional man perhaps does not; but then he is labouring for his family's support and welfare. Surely a man has at least a right to consider whether it is better for his country that he should give to it a half or quarter portion of parliamentary attendance, or quit parliament altogether. Now I believe no man but yourself will doubt that it would be better for the country to have the smallest portion of your time in the house than to take in your stead one of our ordinary representatives, or such a one as would be likely to fill the seat which you relinquish or decline. For my part, I even fancy you coming down like the great Chatham, or some other veteran on great occasions, exciting an interest even by the rarity of your presence, much more by your opinion delivered with all the aid of preparation, and perhaps doing more good in that way than you have ever yet done. Three-fourths of our debates are on questions hardly fit for you, and not worthy of your time. They are such as embarrass you on the middle ground you occupy, and make it difficult for you to act without a real or apparent inconsistency. Whenever a vote requires, in the eye of the public, explanations and distinction from you, it had better not be given at all, for your explanations and distinctions will generally be misunderstood or misrepresented. It has often been

my clear opinion, and as often when we voted together as the reverse, that absence would have been a happy resort for you, and that it was a pity you voted at all. You have a peculiar sort of character to support, and therefore when I thought you right I have felt thus,—there are many things right and necessary to be done which had better be done by inferior instruments, and in the absence of, or without, the participation of those to whom one ascribes peculiar delicacy, or who command superior respect, just as when the floors and stairs are washing, one would wish the ladies and gentlemen to go out or keep up stairs. But I must refrain from particular illustrations.

All this might imply that you must decline the county; and why not on that express ground, viz., that your many private and extra-parliamentary avocations and state of health would oblige you, if you continued in parliament, to be less close and punctual in attendance than the business of such a county requires. Here a new plan of conduct might be publicly and decorously pointed out. Whoever returned you would have notice of it, and could not complain; and if you afterwards did for the county at large all that you could not do in parliament consistently with other duties, where could be the fault? For my part, I repeat that I firmly believe you would have more weight in the house, and do more good there, if you only came when there was *dignus vindice nodus*. As to knowledge of the business depending there, you seem to think that a man can never hear too much, or read or talk too much on any subject, before he votes on it; but for my part I hold that a man goes as often wrong from too much as from too little discussion. Besides, the newspapers, bad as they are, give general ideas enough to enable a man who will take time in his library to make up a sound opinion on most questions before their ultimate decision. I am clear you would be oftener right if you consulted only your own judgment and your books, and not what is said by others, either in or out of the House.

Such, my dear Wilberforce, are my thoughts in

general on a subject in which nobody, not even yourself, can take a deeper interest.

But the bell rings to prayers, and it is late, so I must finish for to-night, praying that you may be directed as is best and happiest for you and yours.

I am, my dear Wilberforce,

Yours ever very affectionately,

J. STEPHEN.

My opinion strongly inclines that you should not sit again for Yorkshire.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE MARQUIS
WELLESLEY.

Herstmonceux, near Battel, August 5, 1811.

My dear Lord Wellesley,

It would be worse than useless, by any remarks of my own, to attempt to add to the abhorrence which will be excited in your mind, by the perusal of the inclosed paper; but it may be right for me to inform you, that it is transmitted to me by a very respectable dissenting minister, (respectable in point both of talents and character,) Mr. George Burder, who is secretary to the London Missionary Society. It may also be useful for you to know, that this Society is a very numerous body, which was formed about twelve or fifteen years ago (speaking from loose recollection), and has sent missionaries to the different islands in the South Seas, and to various other parts. It is supported by the voluntary subscriptions of persons of all the various religious denominations in this country, and once in every year there is a meeting, commonly in May, when, for several days together, sermons are preached and collections made; persons coming in great numbers from all parts of England to attend. The influence of the Society is therefore on the whole very considerable. From all I have heard, I am inclined to believe, that their missiona-

ries have been more respectable, (Dr. Vanderkemp, Mr. Kicherer, &c.) and their success greater, at the Cape, and in its vicinity, than in any other quarter. I know not whether you ever happened to read Barrow's account of the Cape, 2 vols. 4to.; the accounts which it gives of the cruel treatment of the Hottentots, by the boors, strongly confirming Mr. Read's narrative. I have also seen, I am nearly sure, in the same work, a striking confirmation of all which Mr. Read states concerning the hatred felt by the boors towards the missionaries for their kindness to the Hottentots, of whom also Barrow, by the way, speaks in very high terms. The boors were once planning a scheme for exterminating an entire settlement of the Moravian missionaries, and it was only the day before the assassinations were to have taken place, that the plot was discovered and prevented.

You, my dear Lord Wellesley, without a compliment, will know better than I can what course to pursue; whether or not, after more inquiry, any special commission should be sent out, to investigate, and if due presumptive proof be obtained, to try, the parties who are accused of these enormities. I am not aware how justice is administered at the Cape, but I hope in such a way as to prevent any bad effects from being produced by the influence of the boors. It is obvious, however, that it will be necessary to take all due precautions, to prevent the dread of these powerful men from rendering witnesses afraid of coming forward to give evidence. I ought perhaps to mention, what however is obvious, that the paper I inclose was not intended for the eye of government, and that it therefore speaks in plainer terms than it might otherwise use, of Lord Caledon and Major Cuyler. It is pleasing to observe the candour with which it mentions Lord Caledon; and indeed, from all I have heard of his character, I cannot but entertain a firm conviction of his disposition to do justice, and to suppress practices far less horrid than these. But to you, who know what terms were used in speaking of the missionaries in the East Indies, on whose learning and

merits I need not dilate to him who so kindly protected them, it will not appear surprising, if the mind of Lord Caledon should have received a prejudice against the missionaries at the Cape. Perhaps you may wish to hear farther particulars before you determine what course to pursue. Mr. Geo. Burder, who resides in Chamberwell Grove, near London, will thankfully obey any summons he may receive from you.

I remain,
My dear Lord Wellesley,
Your Lordship's very truly,
W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I am just now about to write to your secretary, Mr. Hamilton, about the Calabar Portugal slave trade. May I beg the favour of you, when you have read the inclosed paper, to let Perceval see it?

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Herstmonceux, near Battel, August 23, 1811.

My dear Muncaster,

First be it known to you, that I have at last seen the spot, with my ignorance of which you reproached me the first year I had been here for some weeks, the very spot where William the Conqueror planted his standard. To be within sight of that memorial of our humiliation on the one hand, and on the other to behold the place where Julius Cæsar landed, and afterwards defended his men while he was preparing for pushing his conquests, may seem somewhat ominous. But, *Te facimus fortuna Deum!* and to a man who has been reading Captain Pasley, such omens as these are of trifling import. Have you read, by the way, Captain Pasley's late publication? It is certainly a work of great vigour of thought. You may differ from him as to many of the principles on which he proposes to act, and on the probability of success from pursuing the plans he has pointed out. But *you* must, I am sure,

admire the spirit of the man, and not his spirit only, but his good sense.

There is, however, one great error running through his book, in which he reminds me of men who, calculating on lives and forces, &c. on paper, forget that friction and the air's resistance, and a thousand other causes, interfere in real life. Just so Captain Pasley forgets a certain body called the House of Commons!—a certain thing called party, another named opposition, and a fourth termed the finance committee. In short, our constitution, excellent as it is in most respects, is not calculated for carrying on offensive war with effect; and most ministers, from anticipating the jealousy with which they are to be watched, and the hard measure which is to be dealt out to them, abstain from engaging in any of that class of measures. Still, I say, read Captain Pasley. If I mistake not you will think it a book of more real vigour of thought and independence of character than any which has been written for several years, indeed, since the beginning of the last, or rather, for surely it is the same, of the present war.

Your last friendly letter, my dear Muncaster, reached me yesterday, and you truly say that though 100 miles nearer by the road book, we are substantially as far asunder as ever. I wish we were near enough to allow of our having a *tête-à-tête*. There are one or two points on which I should be glad to talk with you, and when you hear that they are deeply interesting to me, I know I do not deceive myself in believing them to be not a little interesting to you. But separated as we are for the present, they must pass—another topic I cannot but mention to you. It is the price you pay for being known to call me friend, and not only to call, but to give cause for admitting the justice of the appellation. There are certain requests which one feels doubtful about making, and which at the same time one cannot refuse to make. I will send you my friend's letter. He is, I can truly say, a man of genuine worth, and he has *lived* down a great deal of opposition, the best way you will agree with me in which a theologian can defend

his principles and vindicate his character. You must yourself judge of the propriety of undertaking the cause.

I enter into all you say about our friend Smyth's son's match, and am glad he is connecting himself with so good a family, as well as with so handsome a fortune. Your mention of Lord Castlecote brings old times to my remembrance. I beg you will give my friendly remembrances to him; and to the Morritts say all that is kind. Morritt is a man for whom I feel a real friendship; and I assure you he has never done himself justice. Between ourselves, I have often thought he ought to be at some time my successor. I must break off. Kindest remembrances to your daughters from Mrs. W. and

Your ever faithful,
W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Beaconsfield, Sunday afternoon, September 1, 1811.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have ridden thus far on my way to town, and mean to sleep here, though I must be at my office by eleven to-morrow. I rode, after morning service, through a most enchanting woodland path to the southward of Bledlowridge, and meant to take the afternoon service at Woburn, three miles below this place, and to hear Mr. Tyndale, a man you must like if ever you heard him, but found myself (by mis-information as to the hour of his afternoon service, and as to the distance of Woburn from the road) too late to go in with decency, and therefore have proceeded hither,—far enough, I think for a Sabbath day's journey, though I and my horse are fresh enough to proceed. On asking, after dinner, for a book, and a good book, I amused the waiter, as I learned not only from a titter, but a conversation that I overheard. The landlady has furnished me, however, with a book that I do not remember to

have seen before,—“Nelson’s companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England.”

I was not exactly well pleased with my chance, but where may not a man find good if he seeks it? There is, in the brief character and account of the author prefixed, enough to excite attention and warm approbation. He, in some points, seems to have resembled yourself, and he led me to some comparisons of him with a very different sort of creature called James Stephen, not much to the advantage of the latter, when I consider his zeal for those good works which more immediately respect God and the life to come. He dates his preface A.D. 1703, Ormond Street.*

The weakness of our natures, of my nature at least, make even these trifling identities aid the effect of comparison and contrast in other points. But what has led to the present scribble is a passage in which he points out the duty of building and, when necessary, repairing churches. This has really hit me as hard as if a man, or being, who had been inspecting my conduct during this week and the last, had written it on purpose to reprove me. It happens that the little chapel which Mr. Gilbert, aided by the subscriptions of private friends in and out of the parish, had built upon Bledlow Ridge, is, from an original fault in the structure, in danger of falling down. It is thought by Harper dangerous even to sit in at present. The roof must be taken off, &c., and William, on my last visit at Bledlow, was expressing his fears that a fifth part of the necessary expense could not be raised in the parish; yet if the chapel must be deserted, away goes, in winter at least, the church-going of one half of his poor parishioners. To do myself justice, I heard with a general, indefinite resolution of doing what I could to prevent this consequence. I believe I told him I would subscribe; but not one step have I taken, nor even formed one specific purpose on the subject: yet, shame to my selfishness! my thoughts have been anxiously employed on building a house, not for

* Mr. Stephen’s house was in Ormond Street.

God, but for myself, on that very spot. My friend Forbes went there with me for the first time last week, and with all his philosophy and prudence, he is enthusiastic in his praise and admiration of Beech Grove, which he agrees with Mr. Babington in thinking the most beautiful farm he ever saw, and earnestly advised me to do all, and more than all that I meditated, in building a cottage residence upon it. Instead of 100*l.*, to which I had brought myself, he insists on my laying out 300*l.*, and vanquishes my scruples by his opinion of how much it will add even to the marketable value of the property; in short, I have been planning, estimating, contracting, and making two journeys to determine the site, &c., without thinking (except in the way of procrastinating an unformed purpose) of the poor chapel, and “the house not made with hands” connected with it, in which my poor neighbours have so deep an interest.

I have been contriving to cherish the portion of the building season that remains this year. I have already pulled down, got materials, taken up all the vacant hands, and have been pleasing myself with the prospect of covering in by November, while, alas! the poor chapel by that time may be in ruins, and the poor without an accessible place of worship till the next summer, at least. Such is my selfishness and fondness for this bad world, after all the weaning from it I have supposed myself to have had.

Well! Nelson has smitten me for this: and now to my purpose. I know not what the repairs will cost; but I will know D. V. in a few days; and also what the few who can and will give in the parish are likely to contribute. If afterwards I find, as I fear I shall, more help wanting, than I can justifiably give, have you any thing to spare that you can, all things considered, satisfactorily give to such a purpose? I will neither ask, nor allow you to subscribe more than half as much as I do. Your church-building purse has, I know, many claims on it; but I must confess, whatever the shame or sin be, that I do not recollect having ever given to such a purpose before. I am more apt to feel for the tem-

poral than spiritual wants of my fellow creatures, but, alas! not half enough for either, except in one hobby-horsical path.

I am,
My dear Wiberforce,
Ever very affectionately yours,
J. S.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO C. DUNCOMBE, ESQ.
(now LORD FEVERSHAM.)

Yoxall Lodge, November 13, 1811.

My dear D.,

I trust, though I returned no answer to your last letter, that you would not impute my silence to my not sympathizing with you and Lady C. in your heavy affliction. I hope you know too well the interest I take in what concerns you, and besides I am myself a father, and have a daughter whom I tenderly love. I scarcely need say, that when I wrote to you, I had not heard of the melancholy event; but I had seen it in the newspaper, before I received your account of it. In one respect, my dear C., (allow me to open my heart to you without reserve,) your letter gave me real pleasure. It showed me that you were endeavouring to derive your consolation from the only true source. In such trying moments, it is indeed an unspeakable comfort to reflect, that the event we deplore has not happened by chance; but that it is the Ordination of an all-wise and all-merciful Being, who does not willingly or needlessly afflict His creatures.

In truth, such incidents are intended to remind us that this is not our home, but only a probationary state, in which we are to acquire that character, and those dispositions of mind which may qualify us for another and a better world; with the awful consideration, however, that unless we are thus fitted for happiness, we must not hope to enjoy it. My dear Duncombe, I am sure, while I am writing these truths, I feel their

infinite importance to myself, and when I consider my own natural infirmities and weaknesses, (I am speaking of those of the heart of course) I should despair of seeing that great change effected on myself which must be wrought in order to our becoming admissible into the heavenly world, were it not for the gracious declarations contained in the Scriptures, that to the prayers of all who, conscious of their own inability, shall earnestly implore the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, in the Redeemer's and Mediator's name, they shall certainly be vouchsafed. For, religion, I hope I need not assure you, consists not in my mind, in abstaining from some of those public amusements and scenes of dissipation which are so fashionable in the higher world; this abstinence at least is only intended as means to an end, and the obtaining of that end is the grand concern. Blessed be God, this, however, is an endeavour, in which, if we do not faint by the way, we may be assured we shall not, we cannot fail—for innumerable are the promises made to them that seek in the word of God, that blessed book which is so strangely neglected by multitudes who nevertheless believe in its Divine authority.

Following the impulse of my heart I have been led away into pouring forth an effusion which I should be afraid to send, except to something more than a nominal friend, who knows, I trust, the friendly feelings from which it has proceeded. I have scarcely left myself room to say that, having found among some tracts I brought down with me a beautiful little piece of a late excellent friend of mine, Mr. Cecil, I have resolved to send it to you. The late Archbishop of Canterbury I remember, when he lost a sweet young daughter just entering into life, told me, that he was excessively pleased, and he hoped profited as well as comforted by it. On the other subject, I can say no more than I did; not liking to decide till I can consult a friend whom I hoped to see ere now, but shall not see, I now find, for some weeks. W.'s kind remembrances to Lady Char-

lotte, who I hope is pretty well, though I know what a shock she must have sustained.

I am,

My dear C.,

Yours most sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Kensington Gore, May, 1812.
Near 2, Thursday.

My dear Macaulay,

I had scarcely finished my note to you yesterday, when letters and depositions were put into my hands with an earnest request that I would immediately take them to the Secretary of State. Disturbances similar to those of Nottingham have begun near Huddersfield. After a short pause, I judged that I had no right to neglect the duties of my station, providentially occurring, in order to attend to a business which, however important, was less specially committed to my care. This morning again, from breakfast and at it, till now when I have left people in the dining-room to write this note, I have had persons with me on business whom I could not exclude. It grieved me till I reflected that it was the ordination of that Being whose cause I wished to plead, and who knows better than we do what instruments to employ in such services.

I have been consoling myself with reflecting, that perhaps publishing in "The Christian Observer" might have put our opponents on counteracting us, and that it may be as well for us to work for a time in private. But I am sadly discouraged by the lukewarmness of some from whom I hoped better things. But do your best, I will do mine. Let us be clear of the blood, whosoever may have to answer for it. I found the other day, that some Anglo-Indians, literary men, and living in the literary circles, were discrediting and causing others to discredit Buchanan's Account of the burning of Hindoo

widows round Calcutta, by saying, "the account should have been published in the East, where it could have been contradicted. But no, he published it only after he came home."

I have written to Dr. Buchanan, and learn with joy that his memoir, which contains the account of the burnings for thirty miles round Calcutta in 1804, as stated by Dr. Carey, came out in Calcutta in 1806; that Dr. B. staid in Calcutta till 1808, talking with all the learned people about every part of the memoir, and that the burnings were never denied; that he, in the service of government, presented a copy of his work to government, and desired that any error might be pointed out: but none was discovered. You may hear the same stories, and therefore I send you the contradiction of them.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

REV. DR. BUCHANAN TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Kirby Hall, August 6, 1812.

My dear Sir,

I was favoured with your letter this morning, and now enclose a letter for Lord Liverpool, which I shall be obliged to you to transmit with the paper. The sum applied for in behalf of Mr. W. was 200*l*. We request that you will not notice the subscription: it is not of your class—sacred necessity. I smiled at your saying that "you do not lay by any thing." I was rather afraid that your unexampled charity would bring you into debt.

I smiled again when you said you hoped to get through your mass of papers at Sandgate, and be once more a *liber homo*; as if there could be any possible hope of your being a free man in this world.

I returned from Scarborough a few days ago. I had proposed to have passed into the West, but the agitation of the carriage is too much for me in my present state; I am, however, benefited by the warm baths of Scar-

borough. Good Serle, I see by this day's paper, is gone to his own Immanuel. We are all well here, and pray that you may have divine support and comfort in all your tribulation, till that blessed day when you also (a *liber homo*) shall

Clap the glad wing and soar away,
And mingle with eternal day.

If you go before me, let your mantle drop on your servant,

C. BUCHANAN.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS WILBERFORCE.

Lutterworth, October 16, 1812.

My dearest B.,

I am much pressed for time to-day; but I must send an answer, though a short one, to my dear girl's highly acceptable letter, for I do not consider as a reply the few lines which I added to my letter to mamma two or three days ago. While I am rambling about from place to place my heart still keeps its station; and, strange as it may seem, a certain little girl has such a firm hold on my affection, that wherever I am, she is continually presenting herself to my mind's eye, and calling forth the most tender wishes for her happiness. The day, I trust, will come, when she will be able to travel about with me, not merely in idea, but in her own person. Meanwhile, we should be thankful for having the means of hearing about those we love when we are far removed from them. We are now almost two hundred miles asunder, yet I trust B. will be reading this the day after to-morrow, at about the same time of day at which I am now writing it. I trust that all my children, especially the elder ones, are more eminently careful when I am away, to abstain from all that would give mamma pain, and to do whatever will give her pleasure, in order to make up to her for my absence. May God bless my dear children, and more particularly my dear little girl.

How ardently do I long to see clear and indubitable proofs of your having received that divine grace which we must all possess before we can be admitted into the heavenly world. In you, and in my other children, I am always looking to discover any buddings of that fruit of the Spirit which this blessed agent will produce where it really operates, just as a gardener looks over his fruit trees from day to day to see whether the peaches and the nectarines are beginning to appear. I trust I do discern, now and then, a bud in my beloved child's heart. Oh! cherish it, my dearest child, and try to prevent its being nipped or blasted, so as not to come to perfection.

I fear I am not likely to become an entertaining correspondent; it is, however, for a reason which will plead my excuse,—it is because I love her too well not to feel a serious concern for her happiness whenever I think about her. To a common correspondent I could scribble in a facetious strain, and I will try to be more lively in my letters to you, but I recollect that this packet will reach you on Sunday, and therefore I need not check the natural feelings of my heart, which to-day will harmonize with those of my dear girl. I have given you the time which was due to some other correspondents, but I have been drawn on; and now that I am no longer M. P. for Yorkshire, I hope to be able to allot much more, both of my time and my thoughts, to my children. Once more, may God bless you.

Ever your most affectionate

W. WILBERFORCE.

LORD BATHURST, TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed, "Lord Buthurst about Mr. Kendal: good-humoured fun. I had told him that I wished to make sure lest he should be turned out.")

Downing Street, November 13, 1812.

Dear Wilberforce,

I received your letter when I was at Brighton, where I had gone for a few days to see Lady Bathurst.

I enclose a letter in form, such as I imagine you wish : although I must say you explained your reason for asking for such a document in too plain a way. There is nothing so disgusting to a Secretary of State as to talk to him of the probability of his going out. (Your wish was not father, I hope, to that thought.) But to hold this language in the dreary month of November, on the eve of the meeting of parliament, was most inconsiderate.

Yours ever sincerely,
BATHURST.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Kensington Gore, Friday, December 11, 1812.

My dear Macaulay,

I return you ———'s paper,* regretting sincerely that I cannot add to it, but really I have not the faculty of writing with facility any thing that is fit to be read, and it is still more difficult to interweave any additions into the finished work of another than to write a fresh piece.

There is however one idea, one doubt, which I ought to state to you.

We who know — well, can have no doubt of his having treated Miss Edgeworth's entire exclusion of all religious principle with the softness, sometimes almost the easy *badinage* of his reproofs, from a persuasion that the real operating drug in the composition would be least likely to turn the stomach, or rather would sit the best on it when so mixed up and qualified. But should not this be stated frankly in the close, either by the writer of the article himself or by you? It might be done in the very way I have mentioned. You might state,—In all compound medicines the physician commonly depends on some one powerful drug to do the

* *Vide* Review of Edgeworth's *Tales of Fashionable Life*. Christian Observer, December, 1812.

business, considering how he may so combine it with other ingredients as to render the patient most willing, or rather most able to bear it ; or, to speak more plainly, as will either render it less nauseous to the palate or least offensive to the stomach. We conceive that the writer of the foregoing article has acted on a similar principle, &c. I almost fear the piece would otherwise be objectionable, on the ground of levity, or rather on that of the want of sufficient seriousness. Yet I have only read it once over, and that, of necessity, by fits and starts. You know it better than I, and will judge better whether or not my criticism is well founded. I assure you it often grieves me to reflect that I am not a contributor of any thing better than good wishes to the *Christian Observer*, and I will be something better by and by if I can ; but if, while M. P. for Yorkshire, I had much more than I could do, I am sure, I have at present full as much, and hitherto the difference is not so great as you might suppose. It is in the spring that the chief difference will be experienced. Did you hear of Mr. Protheroe's speech the other night ?—extremely good indeed—farewell.

Ever affectionately yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE, TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, April 12, 1813.

My dear Friend,

I hope you will think we have done wonders in Bristol, considering the shortness of the time. I next thought of Manchester. I named to a very sensible neighbour, Mrs. Quincy, late of Manchester, your idea about getting petitions for christianizing India ; she sent me the enclosed, desiring me to get a frank and send it, but we are both so afraid we have not exactly met your wishes that I think it safer to trouble you to read it.

I think it will give you pleasure to hear that I have had a warm and most friendly letter from a certain

episcopal præceptor, to inform me that he has just made his illustrious pupil read through with him "a certain two volumes, written some years ago, for her immediate instruction;" that "she read it with the deepest attention, and constantly expressed the highest approbation."

It gives me pleasure to know, before I die, that the book has not been written altogether in vain, and that the Bishop had the wisdom to keep it back till she was of an age to understand it. I implore you to keep this to yourself. It would be highly improper that it should come from me, nor have I written a word of it to any body.

My health is very bad—surely this tough body cannot much longer hold out against such repeated attacks. Pray for me that the soul may prosper and be in health, but it is sadly clogged by its suffering companion.

Yours ever, my dear friend,

H. MORE.

ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

February 26, 1813.

My dear Sir,

I received your letter the day before yesterday, and would have despatched what you wished for yesterday, but could not get it out of the hands of the bookseller until yesterday evening, it having been necessary to soften a glued back which it had, to make it fit for the mail bag. I hope to send it to-night

I wish I could at this moment make any plain and brief observation that might assist you in the important investigation which engages your mind. I doubt, however, whether time may not be yet amply before you, as the pains the leaders of the Roman Catholics have taken to make themselves and their followers be suspected of dangerous views can hardly have failed to turn against them several of their former advocates, and consequently to produce an unfavourable decision. If it prove other-

wise, I shall be surprised; and if the liberality, thus evinced, be attended with proportionate caution and deliberation, I shall be highly gratified.

Your feeling with me on "the grand argument" gives me much pleasure. I myself am by no means sure that certain exclusions may not, at least for the present, be matter of strict expediency. The places of cabinet ministers, of chancellor, of lord lieutenant, and chief secretary of Ireland, of commanders-in-chief, by sea or land, ought to be in no hands whose attachment to the whole existing constitution can be justly suspected. I do not feel in the same way respecting privy counsellors. There is, no doubt, something imposing in the name; but is it not *magni nominis umbra*—a privy counsellor being in reality no more intrusted with the King's secrets than any other member of parliament? My principle respecting their degree of admission is simply this; I would give them every thing that could magnetize them, and nothing that could injure us.

In balancing the account between these two results, I should decide very differently, if I considered the Roman Catholic religion to be stationary. Were this my persuasion, my fears would be far more on the alert. But most deeply and deliberately considering it as a declining religion, I wish a safe direction to be given to its slow but certain movement. I think if we do not repel the Roman Catholic body, it will approximate to us; and perhaps at no great distance of time, exhibit the phenomenon of a new reformation. I acknowledge that my political solitudes are chiefly kept awake by this moral anticipation; and I should rather see dangers boldly faced (though in reality I think there are no new dangers to be reckoned on)* than that obstacles should be left in the way of a consummation so devoutly to be wished for.

I should therefore wish that Roman Catholics possessing lay patronage in the establishment should be allowed themselves to exercise the power of presenting. To

* That is supposing the EXCLUSION for a time from high executive offices, as advised in the preceding page.—(Note by Mr. Knox.)

deprive them would keep up the old enmity; to allow their presenting would, in spite of themselves, familiarize them, and at length attach them. And, then, consider; what hurt could they do? The Roman Catholic is not like the Arian or Socinian, whose errors from their strictly mental nature admit of being concealed, and stealthily diffused. The Roman Catholic must avow himself. His religion admits of no compromise. It distinguishes itself from ours much more in outward observances than in inward principles; and it insists on all its distinctions with unyielding severity. Truth, therefore, may be undermined by error where the emissary can wear a mask; but when to wear a mask would be, *ipso facto*, to renounce that for whose sake it is supposed to be worn, whatever we may have still to fear from open attack, we have little to apprehend from deep-laid treachery.

What I mean plainly to say is, that no secret partisan of the Church of Rome could take orders or officiate in ours. The thing itself, I dare to say, is impossible. The utmost in this way which could take place, would be a proselyte's delaying his open profession, until he had published something which his antecedent character might procure a reading for, while the avowal of the new character would infallibly deter. I imagine we have just one instance of this—in a work called an "Essay toward a Proposal for Catholic Communion." But no one could be deceived by it. In truth, the very moment in which any one attempted to act on that side, would be also the moment of infallible detection. The ass would appear under the lion's skin. Thus when Parker, Bishop of Oxford, began to take the side of James II. against his Protestant brethren, it could not be concealed for a moment. Every one saw immediately what was in his view; and he was animadverted on accordingly, by those who had engaged as champions for Protestantism.

My conclusion from these premises is, that Roman Catholics possessing church patronage could have no motive to use that power in any way different from

patrons generally. Patrons must present Church of England men, or at least those who are willing to appear such; which it is morally impossible any Roman Catholic should be. As I said, an Arian, a Socinian, a Swedenborgian may wear the livery of our establishment. But to a Roman Catholic it would be infinitely worse than Saul's armour was to David.

When the choice, then, made by Roman Catholics must be, by the nature of things, confined to Church of England clergymen, and when it is utterly unlikely that their choice should be systematically worse than that of others, why should we tremble at giving Roman Catholics a privilege which is possessed by Dissenters, Arians, Socinians, Deists, and even Jews, without as yet awaking a sense of danger by any ostensible mischief? Lay patronage is too likely in any case to be secularly exercised; but to my understanding, not more likely in a Roman Catholic gentleman than in a Protestant chancellor. Conscientious considerations might influence the Roman Catholic. In proportion as he was religious in his own way, he would like to prefer a religious man. But court patronage seldom adverts to niceties of personal character. It turns on another point, and is fixed by other attractions; I own, therefore, on the whole, I can imagine no possible bad consequences from Roman Catholics being patrons, as well as others; and I can conceive good consequences, namely, greater conscientiousness, and growing conciliation.

When I say that the Roman Catholic religion is declining, I do not mean that individuals are deserting it, but that its external professors are losing their respect for it. For example, both priests and laics who regard their religion would assure you, that scarcely any of the present declaimers have any real value for the principles which they affect to contend for. Some of them are notorious scoffers at all religion. If things continue as they are, these characters must multiply, were it only from the increasing custom of sending their sons, when meant for a profession, to our University. The course of education there cannot but enlarge their views, and

induce a habit of judging boldly and decisively on all subjects. Before this exercise of mind their own religion cannot stand. While it is to be contended for politically, they will contend for it; but at the same instant it will be the object of their scorn. The only means, therefore, of avoiding the impending infidelity which this state of things portends, will be to withdraw the revolting barrier which now obstructs their view of our Church, or rather suffers them to see all that can alienate, and nothing that can engage. While they suffer felt privations avowedly for the sake of the establishment, this enmity must continue, and while it continues, all their prejudices must remain. The national Church must be observed, and thought of in one way or the other. Its magnitude and ostensible movements insure this; and therefore, if the ever-recurring thought be accompanied by no other but painful associations, the result must be settled, unremitting, unappeasable malignity, and that strongest where there are amplest means of doing mischief.

On the other hand, do away the privations, and the established religion will become in its proportion an object of fair and philosophical inquiry. Thus contemplated, it will be seen that the same generic features are apparent in both churches; and these great points will seem supported by a concurrent testimony, deriving much additional strength from circumstantial discordance. In matters respecting which the two Churches differ, their doubts will, of course, increase; but in matters respecting which they agree, it may be hoped they will feel the greatest possible confirmation: thus the evil will be prevented which has been so prevalent in countries purely Roman Catholic. There, religion appearing in the one form only, there was no opportunity for instructive comparison, and to reject the tenets of their Church was to plunge at once into the gulf of infidelity. In this country there is a promise of better things, if the means which Providence has furnished are suffered to operate. If we only let our Church unveil itself, and cast away the worse than goatskin covering

of penal statutes, it will not fail to attract and to conciliate, in proportion as reason and taste create a faculty of discrimination.

I intimated, already, that it was not multiplied proselytism that I looked forward to; but an internal reformation of the Irish Roman Catholic Church. I am aware that this is an idea liable to be thought fanciful; but the more I see of passing events, the stronger conviction I feel, that if room be left for growing tendencies to take their natural course, such a crisis must, at no great distance of time, infallibly take place. Proselytism there no doubt will be, and so numerous, probably, as to force the heads of the Roman Catholic Church to adroit changes, in order to prevent the total dissolution of their system. These changes, I conceive, will in the first instance be the dropping the Latin service, and the giving the sacrament in both kinds. But these will not be introduced without concomitants; and if enmity shall have previously passed away, our Church will be looked to as a model in whatever alterations shall be made, till, at length, gradual assimilation on their part will end in the coalescence of both.

I could enumerate prognostics of the event which I am imagining. I could show that the opinions of Roman Catholic divines respecting the salvability of Protestants has materially advanced during the last hundred, or hundred and fifty years; and that though the doctrine of the Church remains avowedly unaltered, the mode of explaining that doctrine has undergone an important change in various instances: for example, it is evident that the worship of images, and prayers to the Virgin and saints, are at this day as much as possible explained away; and that the practices would willingly be dropped if it could be done without acknowledgment of error. These tendencies cannot but go on, and they must at length ripen into substantial results, though it is not for us to know the times and the seasons.

These last-mentioned circumstances are of a general nature: Ireland exhibits not a few peculiar to herself. A practice has grown up within the last twenty years,

of preaching almost as many charity sermons in Roman Catholic chapels as in our churches. There is an imitation of every charitable institution of ours which has MIND for its object; and these establishments can only be maintained by public collections. To such sermons Protestants are numerously invited, particularly as collectors; a consequence of which is, that in common courtesy, and for the sake of the object, nothing must be said offensive to Protestant feelings. But as the best preachers are employed on these occasions, a general habit of uncontroversial preaching will gradually come into fashion: besides, accustoming themselves thus to see us intermingled with themselves, at their own instance, in their places of worship, they must, in spite of themselves, feel toward us as fellow-christians, which feeling alone, active causes of mutual hostility once removed, must lead to growing good-will, and ultimate connection.

A still stronger influence is arising from increase of knowledge, extension of education, and the unrestrained reading of the Scriptures. The heads of the Roman Catholic Church are endeavouring to regulate this last-mentioned practice, by publishing as abundantly as possible, their own translation; but they would be wiser for their cause if they suffered ours to be read without animadversion. The established translation is too well known to be kept out of view; and the differences between the two will be observed, and will stimulate curiosity; besides, persons of taste and discernment will see the superiority of our translation in smoothness and elegance. A certain liberty of mind will thus gradually, perhaps speedily, be formed, which will call for other methods of management than those hitherto relied upon; and the heads of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland will be reduced to the alternative of new-modifying their system, or losing their flock.

A circumstance bearing with some weight on this point is, that the Roman Catholic clergy are themselves differently affected respecting these subjects; some are more liberal; others less. As an evidence of liberality,

I can state from a document now before me, that in an extensive charity school in this city, supported and superintended by Protestants, in which 800 children are taught, the Bible is uniformly read; and yet in the book in which visitors make remarks, there have been within the last year testimonials expressed in the strongest terms from Roman Catholic priests, and one testimonial from a Roman Catholic bishop.

"I visited this school," says one of the priests, Oct. 19, 1812, "and am so much delighted with its admirable system, that on the same, two schools, one for boys and the other for girls, will be erected in ——— parish."

The Roman Catholic bishop's testimonial is, "I have been highly gratified on this day, in observing the manner in which this school is conducted, and do think the master highly meritorious for his mode of conducting it."

There is, therefore, you may perceive, nothing like a systematic opposition to advancing knowledge; and on the contrary, in some a disposition to meet and cherish it. But these are still only commencing habits: what, then, must they not come to, if irritation should once give place to mutual good temper, and if oblivion of political differences were permitted to smooth the path toward religious agreement?

You may have observed, in reading the foregoing paragraphs, that I dwell upon a probable, or rather morally certain, improvement of the Roman Catholic system, rather than an express adoption of ours. I do so because I hold the latter to be out of all reckoning, and the aiming at it to have been the grand mistake during the last hundred years. In the course of that period what has been accomplished by penal statutes, pensioning of proselyted priests, and supporting Protestant charity schools? No doubt Providence has secured its own ends in them all, but the intention of their projectors has been perfectly defeated. To follow Providence is always the wisest course; and without the special order of Providence, a regular Roman Catholic hierarchy could never have remained to this day in Ireland.

Having, then, before us a perfectly organized Church, whose formation at the first, and still more its sustenance to this hour, never could be the mere result of human will, and whose dissolution we, at least, have no means of achieving, why should we not set ourselves as much as possible to meliorate what, in fact, we cannot destroy? As long as the latter object was hoped for, pains and penalties were fair expressions of that hope; but if the aim at gradual melioration appear at length more reasonable, to set those we wish to work upon at their ease will be as congenial to the new process, as restrictions and privations were to the old.

Mosheim, a sharp-sighted observer, gives this definition of the Anglican Church:—*Ille veteris religionis correctio quæ Britannos æque a pontificiis, atque a reliquis familiis quæ Pontificis dominationi renunciarunt, sejungit.*" How far the equidistance is truly asserted, I will not take upon me to pronounce; but to my mind, the idea of *veteris religionis correctio* is so critically just, that the Roman Catholic religion, rationally reformed, would substantially be the religion of the Church of England. That it would become so at once, I do not suppose; but that it would gradually advance toward it, until Providence saw fit to terminate the process, I no more question, were hinderances removed, than that a heavy body would fall when no longer supported.

Where, then, I would ask, is the real danger of setting forward these hopeful tendencies by a liberal repeal of all that could irritate? Is fear entertained that the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland might at length supplant ours, and become the established religion of Ireland? This is impossible. The Roman Catholic church would shrink from any such connection with a Protestant* government as establishment would necessarily imply. To retain its religious independence is essential to its integrity as Roman Catholic. As a church, therefore, it never can aspire to so fatal a distinction. To

* The Roman Catholic Church has since been established by the King of Prussia in Westphalia—with what result is well known.

consent to receive honours and emoluments from a Protestant state, would be to sign its own spiritual death-warrant. It may be brought gradually to be what this would make it, by the sun shining on it after so long and so cold a winter. But while unlike us, it would refuse to take our place, and in proportion as it becomes like us, it will not aim at supplantation, but rather at co-incorporation.

I fear I have taken up too much of your time, and perhaps to little satisfactory purpose; I must now close my letter without reading it over, or lose this evening's mail.

Ever yours,
ALEXANDER KNOX.

JOHN BOWDLER, ESQ., JUN., TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Widley, March 23, 1813.

My dear Sir,

I meant to have returned the enclosed, and to have thanked you for your kind letter as long ago as Saturday, but I have been prevented. To dear ——— I had written almost immediately on hearing of his affliction; but I directed my letter to Grosvenor Square, and perhaps it has not been forwarded. I greatly love and admire him.

I agree with you on the Catholic question, and should have voted as you have done. I believe that we are even of the same opinion as to all the details of the question. I do not wonder that you should feel a little distressed at finding yourself differing from many excellent men on this question; yet I do not know why they should be better judges in politics than in law, and I am sure I should not feel uneasy at differing from all the good men in the kingdom in the construction of an act of parliament. Piety is not a security for a perfect correctness of judgment even in religious questions; witness Luther's strange reasoning, and still stranger conduct, about the sacrament; as well as thousands of

other instances that would occur to a person well acquainted with the history of Christianity, faster than he could write them. *Liberari animam meam* is all the wisest of us can reach.

Knox's letter is very eloquent and instructive. I cannot help thinking that his view of the subject is more just as well as more liberal than that of many good men in this country, who seem to think of the Catholic Church as Mr. Burke did of Jacobinism, that "it is pure dephlegmated defecated evil," incapable of any amelioration. All general principles are against this, and I think, too, the history of that church itself. There was a greater distance between a furious Italian bigot and the Jansenists, than between the Jansenists and the best Protestants. Yet I confess I startle at Knox's idea of giving to the papist gentry the enjoyment of church patronage. It seems to me to involve almost an absurdity, nor do I see how a conscientious Roman Catholic could exercise the right, or wish to possess it. What Knox says about the nature of popery consisting in externals is doubtless in part true; yet I suspect that Father Escobar, or Vasquez, or any of Pascal's heroes, would have both accepted Protestant preferment, and found means to lead their flock more than half way to popery, without incurring any ecclesiastical censures, still less deprivation. Surely, too, Mr. Knox is on very delicate and dangerous ground, when he talks of the Romish hierarchy having been preserved by Providence through so many ages in Ireland. I remember the same argument being used by one who had little religion, in favour of all the abominations embodied under the name of religion in India. Providence, he said, had given them their religion as He had given us ours.

I wish to add one word about myself. You were kind enough to mention, without disapprobation, some religious papers which I sent to "The Christian Observer." I have since, as perhaps you have seen, written others. I thought myself only known to a very few intimate friends, but have just now discovered that the name of the author has been mentioned very openly.

I have really always felt that I was guilty of some presumption in venturing to write on religious subjects, and cannot but feel that many who see these papers, on hearing that they were written by a young layman, will probably think, and perhaps say, that he would have been much better employed in learning and practising than in attempting to teach. I am not sure whether on these and other accounts I shall not discontinue these communications; but whether I do or not, may I hope that at least you and Mrs. W. will believe, that in writing these papers I was not actuated by vanity, still less that I indulge the least idea of being better qualified than hundreds of others to publish on religious topics. My real motives it would require space to explain fully; but my own exercise and improvement was the chief. My only apology is, that a mask generally is understood to confer a right, even to the humblest individual, of speaking with some freedom. My value for your good opinion has induced me to say thus much—and pray forgive my egotism. I am pretty well, and begging you to present my best respects to Mrs. W., am,

Dear Sir,

Ever your affectionate servant,

J. BOWDLER.

REV. DR. COKE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

At Samuel Hague's, Esq.
Leeds, April 14, 1813.

Dear and highly respected Sir,

A subject which appears to me of great moment lies much upon my mind; and yet it is a subject of such a delicate nature, that I cannot venture to open my mind upon it to any one, of whose candour, piety, delicacy, and honour, I have not the highest opinion. Such a character I do indubitably esteem you, sir; and as such, I will run the risk of opening my whole heart to you upon the point.

For at least twelve years, sir, the interests of our

Indian empire have lain very near my heart. In several instances I have made attempts to open a way for missions in that country, and even for my going over there myself. But every thing proved abortive.

The prominent desire of my soul, even from my infancy (I may almost say), has been to be useful. Even when I was a Deist for part of my time at Oxford, (what a miracle of grace!) usefulness was my most darling object. The Lord has been pleased to fix me for about thirty-seven years on a point of great usefulness. My influence in the large Wesleyan connection, the introduction and superintendence of our missions in different parts of the globe, and the wide sphere opened to me for the preaching of the Gospel to almost innumerable large and attentive congregations, have opened to me a very extensive field for usefulness. And yet I could give up all for India. Could I but close my life in being the means of raising a spiritual church in India, it would satisfy the utmost ambition of my soul here below.

I am not so much wanted in our connection at home as I once was. Our committee of privileges, as we term it, can watch over the interests of the body, in respect to laws and government, as well in my absence as if I was with them. Our missionary committee in London can do the same in respect to missions; and my absence would only make them feel their duty more incumbent upon them. Auxiliary committees through the nation (which we have now in contemplation) will amply supply my place in respect to raising money. There is nothing to influence me much against going to India, but my extensive sphere for preaching the Gospel. But this, I do assure you, sir, sinks considerably in my calculation, in comparison of the high honour (if the Lord was to confer it upon me in His Providence and grace) of beginning or reviving a genuine work of religion in the immense regions of Asia.

Impressed with these views, I wrote a letter about a fortnight ago to the Earl of Liverpool. I have either mislaid the copy of it, or destroyed it at the time, for fear of its falling into improper hands. After an intro-

duction, drawn up in the most delicate manner in my power, I took notice of the observations made by Lord Castlereagh in the House of Commons, concerning a religious establishment in India connected with the established church at home. I then simply opened my situation in the Wesleyan connection, as I have stated it to you, sir, above. I enlarged on the earnest desire I had of closing my life in India, observing that if his Royal Highness the Prince Regent and the government should think proper to appoint me their Bishop in India, I should most cheerfully and most gratefully accept of the offer. I am sorry I have lost the copy of the letter. In my letter to Lord Liverpool, I observed, that I should, in case of my appointment to the Episcopacy of India, return most fully and faithfully into the bosom of the established church, and do every thing in my power to promote its interests, and would submit to all such restrictions in the fulfilment of my office, as the government and the bench of bishops at home should think necessary—that my prime motive was to be useful to the Europeans in India; and that my second (though not the least) was to introduce the Christian religion among the Hindoos by the preaching of the Gospel, and perhaps also, by the establishment of schools.

I have not, sir, received an answer. Did I think that the answer was withheld, because Lord Liverpool considered me as acting very improperly by making the request, I should take no further step in the business. This may be the case; but his Lordship's silence may arise from other motives: on the one hand, because he did not choose to send me an absolute refusal; and, on the other hand, because he did not see it proper, at least just now, to give me any encouragement. When I was in some doubt this morning whether I ought to take the liberty of writing to you, my mind became determined on my being informed about three hours ago, that in a letter received from you by Mr. Hey, you observed that the generality of the House of Commons were set against granting any thing of an imperative kind to the Dissenters or Methodists in favour of sending missiona-

ries to India. Probably I may err in respect to the exact words which you used.

I am not conscious, my dear respected sir, that the least degree of ambition influences me in this business. I possess a fortune of about 1200*l.* a-year, which is sufficient to bear my travelling expenses, and to enable me to make many charitable donations. I have lost two dear wives, and am now a widower. Our leading friends through the connection receive me and treat me with the utmost respect and hospitality. I am quite surrounded with friends who greatly love me; but India still cleaves to my heart. I sincerely believe that my strong inclinations to spend the remainder of my life in India originates in the Divine Will, whilst I am called upon to use the secondary means to obtain the end.

I have formed an intimate acquaintance with Dr. Buchanan, and have written to him to inform him that I shall make him a visit within a few days, if it be convenient. From his house I intend, *Deo volente*, to return to Leeds for a day, and then to set off next week for London. The latter end of last November I visited him before, at Moat Hall, his place of residence, and a most pleasant visit it was to me, and also to him I have reason to think. He has been, since I saw him, drinking of the same bitter cup of which I have been drinking, by the loss of a beloved wife.

I would just observe, sir, that a hot climate peculiarly agrees with me. I was never better in my life than in the West Indies, during the four visits I made to that archipelago, and should now prefer the torrid zone, as a climate, to any other part of the world. Indeed, I enjoy in this country, though sixty-five years of age, such an uninterrupted flow of health and strength as astonishes all my acquaintance. They commonly observe that they have perceived no difference in me for these last twenty years.

I would observe, sir, as I did at the commencement of my letter, that I throw myself on your candour, piety, and honour. If I do not succeed in my views of India, and it were known among the preachers that I had

been taking the steps I am now taking, (though from a persuasion that I am in the Divine Will in so doing,) it might more or less affect my usefulness in the vineyard of my Lord, and that would very much afflict me. And yet, notwithstanding this, I cannot satisfy myself without making some advances in the business.

I consider, sir, your brother-in-law, Mr. Stephen, to be a man of eminent worth. I have a very high esteem for him. I know that his yea is yea, and what he promises he certainly will perform. Without some promise of confidence he might (if he were acquainted with the present business) mention it to Mr. —, with whom, I know, Mr. Stephen is acquainted. If Mr. — were acquainted with the steps I am taking, he would, I am nearly sure, call immediately a meeting of our committee of privileges, and the consequence might be unfavourable to my influence, and consequently to my usefulness among the Methodists. But my mind must be eased. I must venture this letter, and leave the whole to God, and under Him, sir, to you.

I have reason to believe that Lord Eldon had (indeed I am sure of it,) and probably now has, an esteem for me. Lord Sidmouth, I do think, loves me. Lord Castlereagh once expressed to Mr. Alexander Knox, then his private secretary in Ireland, his very high regard for me: since that time I have had one interview with his lordship in London. I have been favoured on various occasions with public and private interviews with Lord Bathurst. I shall be glad to have your advice whether I should write letters to those noblemen, particularly to the two first, on the present subject; or whether I had not better suspend every thing, and have the pleasure of seeing you in London. I hope I shall have that honour. I shall be glad to receive three or four lines from you (don't write unless you think it may be of some immediate importance,) signifying that I may wait on you immediately on my arrival in London.

I have the honour to be, with very high respect,

My dear Sir, your very much obliged,
very humble, and very faithful servant,

T. COKE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

Kensington Gore, Wednesday, May 26, 1813.

My dear Lord Wellesley,

After assuring you that it has given me pleasure to hear of your amended health, allow me to beg the favour of you to give me, or kindly inform me how I can procure, your letter concerning the Calcutta College. You were so good, I think, long ago as to give me a copy of it; but though my old stores have been diligently ransacked, it cannot be found; and as the East Indian question is coming on so soon, I greatly wish to see it. I shall be extremely glad if I can be at all useful in promoting the restoration of the college to its old, and I must think necessary, splendour.

Permit me to trouble your Lordship on one more topic. The widow of Mr. Brown of Calcutta,* with her eight children all unprovided for, is come over to this country. I find her late husband, had he lived, or rather I believe had his provostship lasted only about half a year longer, would have been entitled to half pay for life, I rather think to half or one-third of his former salary. When you honoured him with the appointment to the office of provost of the college, he gave up 700*l.* per annum, arising from the discharge of his ordinary professional duties; and he could not recover this income when his office of provost was suppressed. This consideration surely strengthens his claim, while it does away the fear which might otherwise oppose Mrs. Brown's being liberally recompensed, that it might set a dangerous precedent. If you can serve this desolate

* The Rev. Dr. Brown was one of the East India Company's chaplains, of eminent piety, and of so great liberality that he has been known to bestow in charity an entire quarter's salary at one time. Though his family was left "unprovided for" by Mr. Brown, He who has called himself the "Father of the fatherless" raised up friends for them, by whose kindness they were all placed in circumstances of independence to such a degree that it was a matter of regret with people of the world lest others should thereby be encouraged to be equally careless.

family, I am sure it will give your Lordship pleasure ;
and I am always, with great respect and regard,

My dear Lord Wellesley,

Your Lordship's very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I am told that Mrs. Brown's case will be decided soon, so that no time should be lost in countenancing her.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

No. 1. Poet's Corner, Westminster,
May 28, 1813.

Sir,

I trust you will excuse my taking the liberty of requesting you to inform me, where the fact concerning Albuquerque's being thanked by the widows of Hindostan, for saving them from the flames, is to be found. It is mentioned in an article on the Baptist Missionary Reports, and in the first number of the "Quarterly Review," which article is commonly ascribed to you.

May I take the further liberty of stating that you would oblige me greatly, and (what I doubt not would be a far more powerful motive) you would, I hope, render some service to the cause of East Indian civilization, if you could communicate to me any other facts or suggestions which tend to prove either the duty, (duty includes humanity,) practicability, or policy of endeavouring (of course by persuasion only) to christianize the natives of Hindostan. I mean, in addition to what are contained in the article above mentioned. Though of necessity I am scribbling in the utmost extremity of haste (you will forgive the effects of it,) I cannot conclude without expressing how much I owe you for the various writings with which you have favoured the present age ; and I must add, that I have felt a ready-made friendship for you, ever since I knew the anecdote of your kindness in fostering and soothing

the wounded spirit and infant efforts of that most interesting of creatures, Kirk White, of whom it was my misfortune to know little more than his name till I read your beautiful life of him.

I remain with cordial respect and regard,

Dear Sir, your most obliged and humble servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I have long had it in my mind to write to you, but the consciousness that I was taking perhaps an unwarrantable liberty has kept me silent, till it is perhaps too late to answer my purpose to speak at all.

Such is the too common issue of procrastination.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

London, July 5, 1813.

Dear Sir,

I have been very unjust to myself in so long delaying to return you, as I now do, my best thanks for your obliging, and I can truly assure you, most gratifying letter. My dilatoriness might convey a very erroneous notion of the feelings it called forth; for though that vexatious succession of petty interruptions, of which in your country residence you happily know nothing, has concurred with serious business and domestic occupations in keeping me silent, I have quite longed, ever since I heard from you, to assure you that the sort of right you give me, to avail myself of any opportunity which I may hereafter enjoy, of cultivating your acquaintance and friendship, presents to my mind a prospect on which I reflect with no little pleasure. I must add that the idea of meeting you at the Lakes, of which from my early youth I have been a passionate lover, to use the common phrase, renders the picture still more gratifying to me. This, however, is a pleasure which I cannot very soon enjoy; but a very dear and highly valued friend of mine is likely to visit the Lakes this very summer or perhaps autumn, and if you will allow

me to introduce him to you, you will oblige both myself and him. His name is Bowdler; he had entered into the profession of the law, and though there perhaps scarcely ever was a man, the delicacy of whose mind rendered the coarseness and roughness of the practice of the legal profession more uncongenial and less palatable to him, he was advancing, on his very first entrance into it, with a most unusual pace, when his declining health compelled him to quit England for a year or two. He is now so far recovered as to talk of returning to the exercise of his profession in the autumn. In the meantime he is to spend some months in the north; and his head-quarters being in Yorkshire, he means to profit, from his vicinity to the Lakes, to visit that British paradise.

I am aware that if you were to open your doors to all lakers, you would, during the summer, have little else to do, and therefore that it may be necessary for you to make rules on this head, and to rigidly adhere to them. But if you can, without impropriety, suffer my friend to spend a few hours in your society, I think you will not afterwards deem your time to have been thrown away. I ought, I think, to mention that he knows not of my asking for him the privilege of your acquaintance; but, knowing well his attachment to the poetical works of Mr. Southey (and more especially that he has joined with me in tasting and praising the moral sublimity, of which we find so little in any other of our modern poets), I cannot doubt his gladly welcoming the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the man.

I must break off, apologizing for this most hasty scrawl. You will, I trust, excuse all its defects, and allow me to subscribe myself, as I very truly can, with esteem and attachment,

My dear sir,

Very sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. After a hard struggle, of the particulars of which (as usual, so far as I am a party concerned) the

newspaper reporters give a very scanty and inaccurate account, we have thus far carried our proposition for enlightening and christianizing India. I brought your kind contingent into the field in one of our party conflicts.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD TEIGNMOUTH.

Sandgate, Saturday evening,
August 21, 1813.

My dear Lord T.

For some time before I left London it had been almost my daily intention to call in Portman Square, to receive a more particular account of your own state and that of your family. At last, however, I was obliged, unless I could be content to let my family go without me, to cut my cable and slip out to sea, leaving various matters unsettled. I brought down with me a number of unanswered letters, intending before I should set to any other work to clear away this epistolary arrear. But I have been wishing to execute another project, which, however, I have delayed so long as to have outstaid my market. Both Mr. Grant and I have been afraid lest the Anglo-Indians, who are among the most intelligent members of the higher circles, should be able to produce an impression, that we carried our point in the House of Commons by availing ourselves of a popular delusion, contrary to truth and reason. To provide against this, it is to be wished that the public mind could be in some degree instructed. I have had an idea, as one expedient for that purpose, to publish what I should call the substance of my two speeches in the House of Commons, chiefly as the pegs (to use an old saying concerning the text of the Pursuits of Literature) on which to hang up the various authorities and statements by which we establish our side of the question. But, as I have said, I shrink from the task, from a consciousness, besides all other objections, that I am too late. I believe I shall draw up a part, and see how

I like it, though the beginning I have already made convinces me that any speech, thus coldly dictated, from imperfect (very imperfect) recollection, must want any spirit or fire which it might have derived from figurative incidents and allusions. Buchanan, I hear, has published a new book, but I have not seen it; how much the mind in him predominates over the matter with which it is associated.

I have been running over a very interesting little work, "Southey's Life of Lord Nelson." It has raised him greatly in my estimation, yet he affords examples of what is to be avoided, as well as of that which is to be pursued. What a course was his! and yet St. Paul's was really little if at all less laborious or dangerous; and instead of coronets and pensions he met only with reproach and poverty. I have often thought that nothing shows more strongly the perverseness of man, where religion is concerned, than the inadequate sense which is commonly entertained of that apostle's heroic zeal and perseverance. But I am reminded that it is time to collect our family to evening prayers. I have been employing the interval between it and that of my return from an evening walk, in answering your friendly letter, and must now say good night. You sometimes take a stroll; I wish you would direct your steed this way. Even a few days' quiet intercourse at such a place as this, whether climbing the hills or strolling along the beach, would be worth as many years in London, for the friendly interchange of thoughts and feelings. In one particular, this place and neighbourhood have much improved since last year,—and that partly I hope from my expostulations,—in having schools set up in the two towns adjoining, and in Sandgate and its interior village itself. What mercies do we enjoy in this land of peace and liberty; like a little St. Helena, in the midst of a roaring ocean on all sides, we hear all around us the miseries of war, to which by the way we have become sadly too much habituated, while we go in and out in security, and eat and drink under our own roofs, if not under our vines and fig-trees, without a fear for our wives and children.

Never surely was there so highly a favoured country as this—above all, our spiritual privileges.

I have been running through Adam Clarke's Commentary on St. Matthew; there is some very forcible practical matter, and some curious information, but surely a strange *farrago* of out of the way learning, which does not suit the feelings of any one who would read the Scripture devotionally. Have you received safely the manuscript on Providence,* which you were so kind as to lend me? May such sentiments as it contains be ever my own. But my paper reminds me that I must say farewell—rather adieu; begging my own and Mrs. Wilberforce's best remembrances to Lady T. and Miss S., and assuring you that I am,

My dear Lord T.,

Ever sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Sandgate, near Folkstone, September 2, 1813.

My dear Muncaster,

Surely since 1788, when no less than five-and-twenty years and a half ago you watched over me with the tenderness of a parent, and first gave me those proofs of friendly attention, which on all suitable occasions you have ever since displayed, there never was an interval wherein so little intercourse has taken place between us as for the last six or seven months. I will not deny that this has given me real concern; though, so far as our personal intercourse was in question, it was prevented by circumstances which I could not control; and from the time of your leaving the great city till now, and indeed, at this very moment, I have been, and am so much occupied, partly, not to say principally, by my children, as to have been forced to beg a vote of credit from all my correspondents. You can scarcely conceive

* Published in 1834.

how incessantly I was engaged on the subject of the renewal of the East Indian Charter, especially in that resolution and clause which respected the communication of Christian light and moral improvement to our East Indian fellow-subjects; and I am persuaded that we have, by our success in that instance, laid the foundation stone of the grandest edifice that ever was raised in Asia. It too often happens, my dear Muncaster, in the case of our parliamentary concerns, that though we may do what we conceive to be for the best, the consequences of our measure may prove very different from those which we had anticipated from it; and it often happens, too,—and we had an instance of it, I willingly acknowledge, in the last session,—that at the very time that we pursue the course which we believe to be right, we cannot feel quite comfortable in pursuing it, because we see so many whose judgment and principles we highly respect taking the directly opposite one; but where our cause is such an one as that of the Abolition of the slave trade, or the introduction of Christian light and moral improvement into India, by such means as sober reason and experience sanction and approve, we may proceed with confidence.

I suppose you are now in the old castle, with all well, I hope, around you. I am come to the same place in which I was last year: like all other human situations and things, it has its good and its bad properties: its best is, that it is a very quiet place, where we may live just as we please, and see a good deal of each other under the same roof, by seeing scarcely any one else; and as I can associate so little with my wife and children during the session, it is no more than fair that they should have the larger measure of my society after it is ended. What think you of the political prospects that are opening on us? I own I dare not be sanguine, remembering how often we have been disappointed in the result of former coalitions. There are, however, several circumstances which distinguish the present times, and which tend to raise my hopes for our country. There is a marked improvement in the general character

of our clergy, and I cannot but say, that there is less open profligacy among our leading public men than there too often was formerly. The race of buck parsons is nearly extinct; still, I cannot deny that there are other circumstances of not so pleasant a kind; however, my dear Muncaster, neither your race nor mine can be much longer,* for I reckon myself much older in constitution than in years. May we both be prepared for the close of it—all else is comparatively insignificant; though such is the practical folly of men, and too often of men very wise in the concerns of this life, that they go on neglecting those very interests which they themselves would acknowledge to be of supreme importance; and more especially neglecting that very book which they profess to believe contains their sailing instructions, if I may so term them, through the stormy ocean of this life to the haven of security and rest, when, also, the alternative of that haven is — But I must break off. Let me know, my dear Muncaster, how you and Lord and Lady Lindsay and their little one are; and believe me, with every good wish for your temporal and eternal happiness,

Yours, most sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO SAMUEL ROBERTS, ESQ.

London, December 31, 1813.

My dear Sir,

Did you but see the list of my unanswered correspondents, you would own that my sending back even three hasty lines in return for your kind letter was a friendly attention. I say friendly, not polite, because as the school boys phrase it, (a natural simile for a father in the Christmas holidays) we I trust have got out of the chapter of civility and have entered on that of friendship.

You wish me to take up the lottery!!! Why, I have been pleading that cause for the last twenty years. I think I never saw Mr. Perceval so near out of temper

* This letter was written within a week of Lord Muncaster's death.

with me as when I pressed him on that subject. Mr. Whitbread at the same time made (a somewhat strange tune for such an instrument) even a pathetic speech against it; and observe that Mr. Perceval did introduce, strengthened by Vansittart, some improvements which have very greatly lessened the evils. Still I quite agree with you—the thing is wrong in principle: and it is scarcely too strong, considering its formerly not rare effects (I allude to the suicides committed), to say in this case as in another noted instance, “it is not lawful to put the money into the treasury because it is the price of blood.” But I must break off—and say farewell—only remarking that I infer from your language that you did not receive from me a copy of the speech. Your name I was sure was in the list, and I find it is so on consulting it. The copy must have been detained somewhere.

Farewell, and believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours ever most truly,

W. WILBERFORCE.

As for my not mentioning Dr. Buchanan, you don't take into account the really determining motive—that I considered the issue very doubtful, and that I was not at liberty, even out of friendship much less out of civility, to incur the risk of losing a single vote. If you knew the House of Commons and its prejudices as well as I do, I am persuaded you would think differently on that point.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

London, April 9, 1814.

My dear Friend,

So the dynasty of Buonaparte has ceased to reign, as friend Talleyrand informs us. This hath God done. How can I but wish that my poor old friend Pitt were still alive to witness this catastrophe of the twenty-five years' drama (since 1789)? But I recognize (what indeed I must say I have often stated

to be my expectation) the Scriptural principle of Divine conduct, in selecting for the instruments of its favours not the most admired of human agents, but those I doubt not from whom (Perceval only excepted) the voice of prayer has been most frequently poured forth for the success both of our counsels and arms—"Them that honour me," &c. The present ministry also has clearly been more favourable than most others to true religion. Farewell. Kindest remembrances.

Ever yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

MR. JOSEPH LANCASTER TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Elliott's Row, near West Square,
Lambeth Road, Southwark,
4th Month 15, 1814.

My kind Friend,

I have known so much of thy kindness in times past, that I venture to address a few lines to thee on two subjects, the last of which is of peculiar importance, and to it I shall beg thy especial attention.

The first is, that by a series of oppressions I have been made a bankrupt, and involved in utter ruin. I have committed some errors and oversights by putting false confidence in great professions, and my remuneration for large sums of my own disbursed for the public good, has evaporated in a trifle of which more than one third is unpaid.

For myself I could bear this, but I have had to support my father, and my poor wife has been greatly depressed by events so utterly unexpected. For her sake it is, more than my own, that I take the liberty of making a private application for the small sum of five pounds. If we can succeed in raising about one hundred pounds among a few private friends, it will render us much more happy than perhaps we should have been if we had never known the purifying hand of

affliction. I hope at least that the application I am making will not be taken amiss, and that thou wilt cheerfully render me such small assistance as may be most proper.

The second point is the most important; it is one I beg may be confidential. It fills me with awe and dread for the system I have matured—for the perpetuation of all the good I have done and for the great cause of education, the basis of which is and ought ever to be the instruction of youth in the sacred writings.

The Westminster (Lancasterian) schools committee have been convened without my responsibility. The present members met first at the house of —, by his invitation some months ago. They consist of a few good men, chiefly dissenters, and of a number of leading members of the London corresponding societies, &c., and some of them seem to have sworn on the altar of Belial eternal enmity to the religion of Jesus. They have made an attempt already to extirpate the sacred volume out of all their proposed schools. They have been defeated, but the attempt has been shamefully screened and hushed up. I think it my duty as founder of the system to alarm the nation on the subject. It seems to me my Christian duty. The language has been fit for the attendants of the beast who bore the name of blasphemy.

The party are, I believe, connected with Sir Francis Burdett's election plans. Now I am grieved to see the unwise and heady movements of —, in letting the system get into the hands of such a party. Electioneering purposes must be the unavoidable end.

I cannot conceal from myself the most painful fact, that all the leading persons in the Borough Road Institution, &c., are now intimately connected and associated with a set of infidels. They find them men of energy and reason, and business, and they think to make tools of these instruments. But so far from that, I can plainly see that the others are making dupes of them, instead of becoming their tools. These men, of weak

heads but good hearts, are misled to endanger the plan they profess to befriend.

The outline I have given is but brief; the events and facts are to me clear as day. I am sometimes inclined to come out and be separate, for a believer hath no part with an infidel, and though we may in Christian tenderness, bear these men in private society, yet no man who wishes to be an Israelite indeed, can possibly make friendship or join hands with a Goliath, while defying the armies of the living God.

I beg these things may be received in confidence. My mind seems nearly made up, and my way clear; yet I do well to take advice where so great an interest is at stake. The favour of thy early answer will much oblige thy respectful friend,

JOSEPH LANCASTER.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

London, April 1, 1814.

My dear Friend,

I have been very dilatory, but not without a tolerable excuse, if not a full justification. I received the 10*l.* duly, but did not send it, because I knew from Scott himself, that, to the honour of the religious world, he had been so liberally supplied, chiefly without any solicitation, as to have no feelings in his mind but self-reproach for having ever distrusted the good providence of God; and, secondly, an *embarras des richesses* (not that these were his own words—no confidence in any one's veracity would entitle him to be believed, if he should report that old Scott had thus expressed himself, but such was the meaning of what he himself stated), together with a fear that he should grow too fond of money from, for the first time in his life, having more than he had occasion for. If I mistake not, 1300*l.* or 1400*l.* were raised, or are made up, by books sold, &c. Now, in times like these, when whatever is granted to one is withheld from another, it really seemed wrong to execute

the commission without taking your judgment enlightened by these new facts. I shall, however, tell Scott of your intention when I next see him. I am half inclined to ask you to let me give half of your bounty to a very deserving woman, a widow (Scotch), with four or five children, whose husband was a sort of engineer, receiving 300*l.* or 400*l.* per annum salary. One of her girls, about twelve, had got a place, as she herself (the mother I mean) told me, with a very pretty-looking young woman, who came to her house; but sir, she added and burst into tears, she is at home again. They spent all Sunday in playing at cards; taught her bad words—I found this young lady was a player. The remaining 5*l.*, or the whole, I will return, or apply as you shall direct it to be used. I must break off—farewell.

Ever your affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JOHN BOWDLER, JUN. ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Hayes, May 17, 1814.

My dear Sir,

I am doubly in your debt, for, sad to say, I have never returned Mr. D. Stewart's last letter which you were so kind as to send me. I wished to add a few lines, and what with the hurry and the pain of leaving a place where I had passed seven months, what with the fatigue of a little imprudent over-exertion, I did not find an opportunity of writing from Widley. I have since been in town for one night, but I was called up by business with Sir S. Lawrence, and did not intend to have seen any person, though I was unexpectedly enabled to spend half an hour in Palace Yard. I shall be truly happy when it is in my power to see you, more especially if it can be by spending a night or two at Kensington Gore; yet I do assure you your kindness in saying that you will not in any manner misconstrue my non-appearance, if it should so happen, is a relief to my mind; for it

would give me great pain if I doubted for a moment of your unabated cordiality and affection. The truth is, I am not strong, and I am surrounded with distractions, all of so petty a nature, that they only harass without arousing the mind, like flies buzzing in all directions about one. Here for a moment I am in repose, and from this retreat look at the world from which I have long been secluded, and on which I am about to enter again, not without trepidation. Alas, alas! it is a rough and stormy ocean; and in good truth my bark is but a slight one. The more I see and feel, the more I am astonished how men, who do not look to God for protection and support, can bear up at all amidst the contending elements in this dark region. But we know that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God;" and the true wisdom, therefore, must be to labour to secure that which will bear with it, in some form or other, every necessary blessing.

I am sincerely obliged to you for your kind invitation to Sandgate; but I am bound this summer to redeem a pledge made long since of going to Studley, in order to cast an eye on the state of Miss Lawrence's affairs in those quarters. Being so far north, I shall probably go on a little further, and ramble a little about the lakes in Cumberland, and

"Where Ettrick winds its way to Tweed,
Unlike the tide of human time," &c.

—one of the most beautiful and most melancholy passages in poetry. How glad should I be to have you to enjoy and help me to enjoy the delicious scenery of Cumberland!

I am not amiss in point of health, but my strength is not great, nor my spirits very buoyant. Pray make my kindest regards to Mrs. Wilberforce, accept my best thanks for the enclosed, and all your kindness respecting it, and believe me,

Very gratefully and affectionately, yours,

J. B., Jun.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO WILLIAM HEY, ESQ.

Near London, May 13, 1814.

My dear Friend,

Value as you ought, and be thankful for your power of going on with little sleep, as well as your excellent method of economizing in the expenditure of your time. I fear I must acknowledge as much inferiority in the latter instance, as from my bodily infirmities in the former. I am quite overloaded with business of various kinds, and perhaps I am doing wrong in now writing to you, to the neglect of a more pressing call, but I will be short.

Lord Sidmouth assured me he was considering what remedy to apply to the dreadful evils mentioned by Mr. Nixon.

It is now several years since Mr. Todd Naylor wrote to me from Rio Janeiro; and I spoke more than once to the successive secretaries of state (Mr. Canning, &c.) urging on them the importance, and even necessity of a chaplain, and of divine worship for Protestants, &c. at Rio. The whole difficulty *then* consisted in the payment of the expenses. At Lisbon the factory was used to support the ecclesiastical establishment; and I was assured that the matter should be considered, and the merchants be consulted through our consul at Rio, and desired to settle some permanent dues, probably in the way of duties on exports or imports, which should be appropriated to that use. I will name it at the Secretary of State's office, and also to the Archbishop of Canterbury, if I can, to-morrow, as I mean, D. V., to dine at Lambeth; but do you also name it to your friend, and urge on him the importance of promoting among the merchants, and other English at Rio, a disposition to support the chaplaincy in whole or in part. The Roman Catholics cry shame on us; our not having a clergyman even to bury the dead, is thought shocking, and we are deemed almost a Pagan nation, altogether insensible to religion.

I quite rejoiced at your Abolition clause in the ad-

dress; such a clause was unanimously assented to in an address of a public meeting at Liverpool. I quite rejoice also in the idea of having your prayers. O, my dear sir, what an unspeakable blessing it is to know that we serve a master so ready to bear with our infirmities, and forgive our sins, negligences, and ignorances. I little thought when I began of saying more than three words about the Rio chaplain, and adding that I am ever

Your sincere friend,
W. WILBERFORCE.

I sent your inclosure to Macaulay. I hear rather favourable accounts from Paris about the disposition of people in high stations towards the Abolition; but the mercantile world are intent on gain, the profligacy of manners and morals great, and even the manners become rough, &c.

I have ideas of endeavouring to get up benevolent institutions, and I hope Bible societies, in some of the great towns in France.

PRINCE TALLEYRAND TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Juin 1, 1814.

Monsieur,

Je vous dois des remerciements pour l'obligeance extrême avec laquelle vous m'avez communiqué vos craintes sur le parti que prendra la France relativement à la traite des nègres. Vous m'avez tout-à-fait rendu justice en pensant que je lirais avec grand intérêt les vues d'un homme déjà si justement célèbre à tant de titres, et qui a rendu son nom à jamais illustre par sa persévérance à poursuivre l'abolition d'un commerce aussi contraire aux règles d'une saine politique qu'aux lois de l'humanité.

Je ne pouvais ignorer sans doute, Monsieur, l'histoire de cette grande question politique, agitée si longtemps et avec tant d'éclat dans le parlement d'Angleterre; mais

vosre lettre est venue y ajouter un nouvel intérêt par la justesse de vos observations, et par la chaleur même que vous mettez à les faire prévaloir, et à les appliquer à la conjoncture actuelle. Cette, lettre, Monsieur, a été pour moi l'occasion de renouveler toute mon admiration pour un pays dans lequel les plus grands hommes d'état non seulement conçoivent les projets les plus utiles au monde, mais en poursuivent l'exécution avec cette prudence, cette sagesse, et cette persévérance qui en assurent le succès. Le courage qui donne la patience de mûrir un plan, et d'en attendre l'application, est souvent plus difficile que celui qui fait briser tout les obstacles. Combien est heureuse l'Angleterre de posséder des hommes qui savent mettre vingt ans à établir une belle institution ! La méthode des mesures violentes et précipitées a failli perdre la France ; elle pouvait perdre l'Europe.

En voyant les folies que nous faisons de ce côté de la Manche, j'ai souvent tremblé pour la civilisation Européenne. Je me rassurais en contemplant la sagesse, la raison, la prudence, et les lumières de vos hommes d'état. Ces réflexions me ramènent actuellement à la question qui vous intéresse, et qui est véritablement la votre, puisque vous avez eu la gloire de la proposer le premier à la Grande Bretagne.

Le traité de paix qui vient d'être conclu vous prouvera que les vues du Roi ne s'écartent point des votres a cet égard. Ce Prince éclairé a le désir de voir abolir la traite des nègres ; mais il a pensé, comme le gouvernement Anglais, que cette mesure ne pouvait s'opérer qu'avec précaution. La France n'était point préparée sur ce sujet comme l'Angleterre. Cinq années nous suffiront pour parvenir au but que vous désirez atteindre.

J'aime à croire, et je suis heureux de penser, que désormais nos deux gouvernements s'entendront pour les grandes vues d'humanité ou d'utilité publique qui naîtraient sur l'une ou l'autre rive de la Manche. Nous avons à présent tant de raisons d'être unis, que cette disposition mutuelle ne peut que resserrer les liens des

deux pays. Ce vœu si ardent que je formais depuis longtemps pour la prospérité de nos deux pays, vient de se réaliser par le traité de paix que vient d'être conclu.

Agréez, je vous prie, l'assurance de ma considération la plus distinguée, et des sentimens particuliers, avec lesquels j'ai l'honneur d'être,

Monsieur,
 Votre très humble et très
 Obéissant serviteur,
 LE PRINCE DE BENEVENT.

MONSIEUR LA FAYETTE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Paris, Juin 3, 1814.

Monsieur,

Mon ami Alexandre de Humboldt, connaissant mes obligations envers vous, et mon vieux dévouement à la cause dont vous avez été l'heureux défenseur, a pensé que j'avais quelques droits pour lui donner une lettre d'introduction dont il sent tout le prix. Je saisis moi-même avec l'empressement l'occasion de vous offrir le double hommage de reconnaissance que vous doit un ennemi de l'esclavage et un ancien prisonnier d'Olmütz. Le nom de M. de Humboldt est trop célèbre pour y rien ajouter : je me permettrai pourtant de dire que le plus infatigable courage dans la recherche, et le génie le plus extraordinaire pour l'acquisition de tout ce qui est à la portée de l'esprit humain, sont en lui des qualités moins éminentes encore que celles de son cœur. Vous jugerez combien il a joui de vos succès philanthropiques, et combien il souhaite les voir complètes sans restriction ni retard. Agréez, Monsieur, tous mes vœux, ma haute considération, et mon reconnaissant attachement.

LA FAYETTE.

HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Temple, Tuesday.

My dear Friend,

You may easily believe I have thought of nothing but the treaty for two days past, and have each moment found out new cause of vexation and indignation. A fine return truly, and a pure sense of the benefits they have received, those base Bourbons are evincing!

As for Alexander and the other allies, they may cheaply enough be abolitionists, having not one negro,—as I doubt not the Bourbons are all for abolishing villenage. This liberality at other people's expense is, I believe, the whole amount of the magnanimity we hear so much of. However we must try even such means rather than despair; and we ought to think betimes how to set about it. A strong expression of the sense of parliament on this unexampled atrocity is the best means; and while the allies are here—if possible while they are present. Public meetings and addresses are another. I have set the City men upon inserting a great deal to this effect in their address, and should hope it may go round. Lord Grenville should do so at Oxford; the Duke of Gloucester at Cambridge, if they go there.

But in truth one is disheartened and sick of men, and above all of rulers. Any thing so cold-blooded and base never could have been perpetrated but by French politicians of the worst school.

I inclose Dumont's letter, just received, and am

Yours most truly,

H. BROUGHAM.

MADAME DE STAEL TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Combien vous devez être heureux de votre triomphe, vous l'emporterez et c'est vous et Lord Wellington qui aurez gagné cette grande bataille pour l'humanité. Soyez sure que votre nom et votre persévé-

rance ont tout fait. D'ordinaire les idées triomphent par elles mêmes et par le tems, mais cette fois c'est vous qui avez devancé les siècles. Vous avez inspiré à votre Héros Wellington autant d'ardeur pour faire du bien qu'il en avoit eu pour remporter des victoires, et son crédit vers la famille royale a servi à vous pauvres noirs. Vous avez écrit une lettre à Sismondi qui est pour lui comme une couronne civique, ma petite fille tient de vous une plume d'or qui sera sa dot dans le ciel. Enfin vous avez donné du mouvement pour la vertu à une génération qui sembloit morte pour elle. Jouissez de votre ouvrage, car jamais gloire plus pure n'a été donnée à un homme—

Je me mets à vos pieds de tout mon cœur,

A. DE STAEL.

Paris, ce 4 9bre, 1814.

RT. HON. G. CANNING TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Gloucester Lodge, October 25, 1814.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have to thank you for both your letters—that to myself, (which I have shown and talked over with Liverpool, and should have been glad, had it so happened, that we could have talked with you together,) and the printed one to Talleyrand, which I put by to read on *my* middle passage. I am working hard to get off* on Saturday, but the carrying a family beyond sea is no trifling undertaking.

I ought not to omit to say, in reference to one part of your last letter, that I do not believe, nor does Liverpool, that Lord Strangford is unfriendly to the cause of Abolition, but that he really and *bonâ fide* has done all that could be done in so very unfavourable a position.

I need not assure you that I will not leave any thing unattempted, publicly or privately, to forward the great object; and I know no object of which it would make me happier or prouder to be able to aid the accomplish-

* To Lisbon.

ment. But I think we shall find that we must be contented to go gradually to work; and I am satisfied that rough measures and a tone of dictation would tend rather to alienate our ally altogether than to bring him over to our views. Recollect, that if France be not sincere, here is a point of union between her and the Peninsular powers.

I am to see Souza, and have a talk with him tomorrow; but I fear he is not to be wrought upon to do much for us. I shall endeavour, at least, to get him to be quiet, and not counteract us.

Could my secret have been kept I should have been very desirous, indeed, to have had two or three months of perfect privacy and tranquillity before the arrival of the Prince; but it being once known what I was to be, there was no chance of peace for me in a private station; and therefore it is determined that I go out as ambassador.

Will you take the trouble to order a complete series of the Reports of the African Society to be sent to me? I have had them from time to time, but in my packings I have not been able to find a regular set. If they could be here by Friday it would do; or they can be sent after me.

Ever, my dear Wilberforce,
Sincerely and affectionately yours,

G. CANNING.

HENRY THORNTON, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

London, October 28, 1814.

My dear W.,

I have been almost ashamed of writing to you until I had read your book,* which I can assure you I much approve; and I give you my warmest congratulations on your being so far honoured by Providence as to be the means of disseminating thus widely over the

* Letter to Talleyrand on the Slave Trade.

globe principles of humanity, with some infusion of religion, and the spirit of true and practical freedom. I trust your work will soften down some of those feelings of national animosity of which I hear so much in many quarters. I doubt whether you are not a little too handsome (it being, indeed, politic to be handsome) towards the French people. But your translator, I conceive, has made you say more in French than you had said in English.

What say you to these American affairs? I grieve over the hard blows we are exchanging, and the permanent animosities which we are thus generating. It may be true that if we make war on a country whose government is so democratic, and whose territory is so extensive, it may be necessary to operate on the public mind by spreading our blows in some such manner as that in which we are bestowing them; but even then the destruction of all civil buildings seems questionable, and the policy of embarking any deeper in war at all when negotiators were assembling, and peace was the word through Europe, strikes me as too pugnacious, and as rather unchristian, not to mention the errors in particular expeditions. It seems as if in politics, as in private life, there must ever be some trouble. The next waves, I trust, will not be so high as the last; but there will, I suppose, be much rough work, especially in parliament.

Remember us kindly to Mrs. W.

Yours, ever affectionately,

H. THORNTON.

PRINCE TALLEYRAND TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Vienne, Novembre 6, 1814.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire le 19 du mois dernier. Vous savez quelle est mon opinion : il y a longtemps que je suis tout-à-fait convaincu, mais tout le monde ne l'est point ; et vous trouverez en France beaucoup d'adver-

saires, c'est-à-dire beaucoup de préjugés, à vaincre. Vous connaissez la nature des préjugés : ce n'est point en les heurtant qu'on peut en triompher. Il faut des ménagements. Il faut surtout de la patience et du temps. La publication de vos écrits en France ne peut produire que de très-bons effets. Pour moi, je n'y vois aucune difficulté, et je ne pense pas qu'elle puisse en éprouver. On ne peut pas douter que la vérité, dont vous êtes le zélé défenseur, ne soit un jour généralement reconnue. Je lirai avec plaisir tout ce que vous écrirez sur cet objet, et je fais des vœux bien sincères pour le succès de vos soins.

Je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur, l'assurance de la haute considération avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant Serviteur,

LE PRINCE DE TALLEYRAND.

MRS. MARTHA MORE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, November 22, 1814.

My dear Sir,

With anxious impatience have I been watching for the moment, when by any accident I could discover from yourself that our last conversation, at Barley Wood, had not escaped your memory. Your kind little note has raised my spirits, by convincing me it is still in your thoughts, and the moment seems arrived when I may fully open my mind to you without intrusion; and in the fullest trust and confidence I begin my little tale.

It is almost forty years ago (for I was very young) that I began, by myself, to keep all her* letters to us of the literary anecdotes of the day. I have of course amassed a great deal. I have a very sensible confidential female friend, who writes very well. With my school and family cares, I wanted aid. I enlisted this lady, who is truth and secrecy itself. Soon after you left us; shut up in my little chamber we began our labours. I must

* Mrs. Hannah More.

now sketch to you what we did in about two months. A regular narrative of my sister's life, not forgetting the petty things of her childhood, including all the necessary circumstances of her life, to the day when she was first introduced to Mr. Garrick. We then make extracts from her own letters, which chiefly carry on her history for the next twelve or thirteen years; here you have the whole state of the Blue Stocking day. I have made a point to give accurately her play-going day: thank God, it was short. When she begins to shorten her London visits—then the whole of the schools, clubs, &c. is brought forward, aided by a private journal of my own. We then take up the milkwoman, arrange all that pretty affair: I then plunge into the Rev. Mr. Bere's business, have gone through the whole of it, and brought the memoir down to the "Hints to a Princess." All her writings as they came out are regularly introduced in their places, with what was said of them at the time. The above is done in clean, plain, simple writing, with every date in its proper place—it fills many quires of paper. It is ready for whoever you may hereafter wish to be the editor. Much is yet to be done: on the last ten years of her life I have not yet touched. This includes "Cœlebs," "Practical Morals," "St. Paul." And now, my dear Sir, I have anxiously watched for the chance of your coming westward, but all in vain; and when I heard your family were in Kent, I gave up all hopes of seeing you this year, but your little note revived my hopes again. To read it to you a couple of hours at a time, would now be the greatest pleasure I could know in this world; for the heroine of our history, I think, will not be very long with us—not if I judge by her mind, for that certainly brightens.

I know I have taken up too much of such time as yours; but I know also your kindness to me the last twenty-five years; and that you have been so good, as indeed Bishop Porteus had done, as to touch upon this subject. I hear occasionally many are making memorandums, and getting ready her history the moment she departs. What impertinence! When you have read

this, you will of course burn it; my sister does not know I am writing, but she knows of your note, and says my head will be turned at having a secret with you. Of course I have told her the outline, and she laughs at my folly, but she shall not read my book.

Of course you will not take the trouble to answer this: I should be grieved if you supposed I could think of troubling you.

I remain, dear Sir, with every grateful feeling,

Your truly obliged,

MARTHA MORE.

I will scribble a line about my sister on a separate bit of paper.

SIR SIDNEY SMITH TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Vienna, December 5, 1814.

My dear Sir,

I duly received your letters, and the packet of the printed ones for Prince Talleyrand, and have made good use of them. I cut the pamphlet open before giving it to him, to insure the better chance of his reading it, or, at least, his dipping oftener into it. He assured me, the next time we met, he had read it all, and that the arguments were so convincing to his mind that he would cause it to be reprinted and circulated in France, with a view to forming public opinion there on the same ground. He said it was eloquently drawn up; that if France had had the same experience, or if she had not had the disadvantage of a want of intercourse with England (in a literary point of view) for twenty years, no doubt her feelings and opinions would be the same. At present, the feeling was that colonies were necessary to her, and an importation of slaves necessary to restore their cultivation; and that she could not be persuaded on a sudden, and would not be compelled, to forego that source of wealth and prosperity as a resource to restore herself to her position in Europe.

In answer to my reasoning, he said in admission thereof, "*La chose m'est démontré (à moi) ; il s'agit de la démontrer à la France ;*" so much for the power of a wrong public opinion—would that a right one were formed, and were as powerful. On the subject of the white slave trade on the north coast of Africa, and the recent kidnapping of some poor cultivators from the coast between Nice and the Var, officially announced here, P. Talleyrand and others immediately revert to the old idea of driving the "Barbary powers back by European force, and colonizing that coast." My idea is to bring the oppressed native African princes forward to drive the Turkish banditti home, requiring the Porte to recall them, or at any rate to deny their recruiting in Turkey, and disavow their piracy and political existence as independent states. I am at work towards this end, and thus ultimately to abolish the slave trade in Africa, but I am aground for want of money, and I have not any more inheritances to expend in the service of my country and mankind. Could you not get a couple of hundred pounds lodged at Coutts's in my name by the African Institution or Association (both are equally interested) for this purpose?

I would give a regular, and I am confident a good account of the expenditure, and the result. My correspondence extends from Lebanon to Atlas. Trifling presents thus multiplied cost money, and I have no more to spare with justice to my family.

Yours, very truly,
W. S. SMITH.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO GENERAL MACAULAY.

Barham Court, near Maidstone,
Saturday night, January 7, 1815.

My dear General,

Before I proceed to the subject on which I have been for some time intending to trouble you, let me, while I recollect it, mention that which is brought to

my mind by the copy of the Duke of Wellington's letter to you, for which I return you many thanks. I have long intended to take the first opportunity of informing you, that having occasion to write to the Duke of Wellington, and growing more and more uneasy concerning the publication* in the Bristol paper, I named to the Duke the whole affair exactly as it had taken place, before I received your letter. Finding your opinion the other way, and presuming it might in part be grounded on your knowledge of the man, I was sorry I had so done. However, no harm appears to have ensued, and the Duke, like a man of large mind, forgets his own personal share in the business, as you must have remarked, and only seems alive to the possible effects on the cause. The circumstance, in that point of view, has given me real pleasure, as an indirect, and thereby the most powerful indication of the interest which the Duke of Wellington really takes in the success of his negotiation for Abolition. I do not, however, forget that it has been owing most likely to your kind and promised warning, and to the measures I immediately took in consequence of it, that the Bristol paragraph was not copied into the London newspapers, where it would have attracted much more notice.

But I have detained you much longer than I meant or expected on this topic; and having had very little time when I began at my own command, still less of course is left for mentioning to you the case of the family of one of the best of men, the late General Burn of the Marines, who died lately, leaving a widow and nine or ten children. The General was a Christian of many years standing, and they who saw him the most intimately, thought of him the most favourably. I am not, I ought to tell you, merely a volunteer in this good cause; the General left behind him a letter, in which he recommended his surviving family to my good offices I have had so many proofs of your generosity, and of your

* A paragraph, which it was feared might prejudice the negotiation at this time proceeding in France, on the subject of the Slave Trade.

Christian consideration, that I shall be persuaded you had good reasons, which did not impeach either of them, if you should contribute nothing; and I should be a slow scholar indeed, if I had not learned your friendly regard for myself too well to impute your noncompliance to any failure in that quarter. But where are you gone all this time? I wish you would give a look in upon us during our stay here, where, D.V., we shall continue, except for an occasional visit for a day or two at a time to see Mr. Henry Thornton, till the meeting of Parliament. Here is a good house, and a pretty good library, with large fires within doors, and a sweet place without, which, even at this season, retains the traces, most unambiguous traces, of rural beauty. It really would give me pleasure to see you, only favour me with a line, that my only other proposed visit to town, if I pay one at all, may not happen at the time of your coming. I must not trust myself with another sheet, and so I will on this crowd in my best wishes for you in time and through eternity. Ever your sincere friend,

My dear General,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I ought, however, before I lay down my pen, to inform you that I have this day heard from a friend that the French government have abandoned the designs on St. Domingo, and are about to offer treaties both to Christophe and Petion, stipulating against slavery: this looks well. I have received to-day, also, a packet from Henry I. of Hayti, or rather from his secretary of state. You shall see it.

JOHN BOWDLER, ESQ. JUN. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed by Mr. W. "Dear Bowdler, day after dear Henry Thornton's death—delightful picture of the man—just before his own seizure.")

Lincoln's Inn, January 17, 1815.

My dear Friend,

I think I am indulging my own feelings rather

than attempting to soothe yours in writing these few lines; but I have felt so much for what I too well know you must feel at hearing the heavy tidings of yesterday, that I cannot remain silent. Oh! it has been a heavy blow to dear Mrs. H. T., to you, to me, to all! I am glad to think you were in some degree prepared for it, and it is quite a consolation to me to know that you saw him, and that the interview was so full of satisfaction, though not unmingled with sadness. To the latest moment of my life I shall thank God for his exceeding mercy in having prolonged his life three days after my return from Staffordshire. Had he died on Friday morning (as might well have been), it would have been a cloud and grief for all succeeding years. Thank God I saw him on Friday, and was able to answer two questions respecting his worldly affairs, which gave him some anxiety. I saw him also again on Sunday evening, and the memory of that interview will long, very long, be dear to me. His deep humility under the sense of sin, and perfect trust in his Redeemer; his feeble voice, yet clear, unclouded intelligence; his depression under the weight of disease and suffering, yet meek collectedness and unaffected resignation, were a sight for angels to behold. I doubt not they did behold—and bless that Almighty Lord who had subdued even sin and death.

You will be glad to hear, if this should reach you before you receive intelligence from others, that Mrs. H. T. has been most wonderfully supported. She was perfectly calm, and not materially ill, at a late hour last night. The account this morning, for I did not see her before I came away, was that she had some sleep, and no terror or agitations during the night. Mrs. Grant was with her, who was surely made to comfort the distressed—so soft, so gentle, so unwearied. I trust in God that dear Mrs. H. T. will be sustained and comforted under this tremendous blow by his grace and power, who has peculiarly claimed for himself that blessed privilege. Poor M. was greatly afflicted; but

she has an extraordinary degree of self-command, and though she will suffer much, youth is buoyant.

While at Kensington Gore I had no time to think of any sorrow but those around me; but since I left them I have begun to feel for myself and for others out of his immediate family. Alas! alas! indeed God has not forgotten to be gracious, all is ordered in love and pity; but the loss is irreparable. Even this day, the first that has dawned on his lifeless body—even this day I have wanted his counsel. And how many, many, are there to whom his example gave confidence and guidance in their humble exertions, who leant on him, and looked to him in every season of doubt or temptation. But I have grown querulous, and it is time to have done. I am not ill, but a little overcome. Surely those who survive should consider his memory as a bond of the closest affection: and while they humbly endeavour to supply to the world by their increased exertions the sad vacancy which his death has occasioned, endeavour also to supply to each other, by the warmest friendship, that chilling void which is now filled only by his memory. And, oh! may that blessed day come quickly when, cleansed by the blood of our common Saviour, we may all sit down together in a kingdom where death shall no more have dominion over us. I meant to have written to you before this sad event drew towards itself all my thoughts and feelings. I meant to have said how deeply both —— and I felt your great kindness, and how much we delight to think of your affection for us. Indeed, it is among the blessings which we most highly value and cherish. God, I humbly hope, will be gracious unto us, and bless us, and teach us to serve him in lowliness and faithfulness all our days. Our present affliction, I trust, will teach us, by His grace, to recollect that this is but our pilgrimage, and that true union must be in a world where we need not fear a separation. May God bless you, my dear friend, and give to you and yours all that is good in this world and for ever.

Yours, very affectionately,

J. BOWDLER.

I saw dear C. just before dinner; though cast down himself, he came to comfort me, and he did comfort me. His first inquiry was if you were informed of it. Indeed, indeed, we both feel much for you.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Chelsea, Tuesday afternoon, half-past Three.

My dear Wilberforce,

I am just returned from the sad scene at Clapham Church Yard, and have not time to answer your letter as fully as I could wish.

The last tribute of respect to the mortal part of our friend has been properly paid. There were a very great number of respectable persons, and few dry eyes. The chief mourners were Mr. Thornton, Mr. John T. and the two elder boys, Lord Teignmouth, Mr. Grant, Mr. C. Grant, Mr. G. Thomson, Mr. W. Smith, and I, with a friend from Hull whose name I forget: we, with Mr. Melville (and nobody else that I remember) accompanied the hearse in mourning coaches from Kensington Gore, with our carriages following, and were met in the church, where a great number of other friends were waiting, by the clergyman, &c., and the usual part of the funeral service was then performed, after which the rest of the solemnity took, at least, an hour,—I think an hour and a half,—from the long train of carriages which had to take up and set down at the churchyard. I had little curiosity to see who were there, but saw Lord Calthorpe, Macaulay, Brougham, R. Grant, &c. of our acquaintance, and among them poor old Mr. Wolff. The coffin was placed on the top of his mother's: we saw that of his father, too, and several others of the family, in the vault.

But how trivial these things! I mention them only because you desire me to give you any particulars that may be interesting. The most interesting part of the transactions, the deep and respectful grief of the attending friends, you can easily conceive.

I must hasten to conclude, or lose the post. My dear Mrs. S. desires me to say that if you are not soon better, she wishes to go to see you. I hope to-morrow's post will relieve us from all anxiety on that score. It is, perhaps, providential that you could not come. The long stand in the churchyard was very trying; I could hardly bear it.

I was afraid for Mr. G. and Lord T., and should have been much more so for you.

God bless you, my dear W. Pray take care of yourself. We could not bear,—I am sure I could not,—to lose you also. May I never see that day!

Love to Mrs. W. and the children.

Yours ever, very affectionately,

J. S.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Barham Court, January 26, 1815.

My dear friend,

I must acknowledge the receipt of your beneficent inclosure with many thanks.

A complaint which still confines me to my sofa, (though much abated, D.G.) rendering the act of writing irksome to me, I must check the disposition I should otherwise feel to pour forth some of the effusions of my heart. Our loss is very great, yet the common old consolation is not, and never can be, worn out, that our loss is to our friend unspeakable gain; and assuredly when we reflect on the exchange of a body of sickness and pain for the happiness of paradise, and a clearer prospect of the opening glories of the heavenly world, we must be conscious that it would be gross selfishness to wish to recall him. Yet poor Mrs. H. T. may indeed sorrow, though not as those who are without hope; and she is wonderfully supported.

Your letter quite comforts me under the disappointment of having been absent from the funeral. From what I since hear, it was indeed providential that I

yielded to my good wife's tender importunities, and remained on my sofa. Farewell. May God be with you, both in your person and your publication. When are we to see it?

With kindest remembrances, I am ever,
Your affectionate friend,
W. WILBERFORCE.

LORD CALTHORPE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

February 1, 1815.

My dear W.,

You may probably have heard before this reaches you, that our dear friend* has been taken from us sooner than any of us had anticipated—he died soon after twelve o'clock to-day, rich in faith, and in the promise of eternal blessedness. I shall feel real comfort in seeing you.

Ever affectionately yours,
CALTHORPE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. DR. COULTHURST.

London, February 11, 1815.

My dear Doctor,

When I tell you that scarcely a week had passed after the death of our excellent friend Mr. H. Thornton, before another friend was called away, no less valuable, and only less dear to me because of more recent acquisition, and when you hear that yesterday morning brought me tidings also of the sudden departure of Dr. Buchanan, and when I tell you that all these trying events find me labouring under an unusual turmoil of worldly business and engagements of time and thought, some of them of a very distressing and trying kind, you will not expect a long letter from me, but allow me to

* John Bowdler, Esq. Jun.

offer (as when we meet a friend with whom we have not time to converse) a friendly assurance of the continuance of attachment and regard, as standing in the place of a more continued expression of my thoughts and feelings. One sentiment however I will express, because, blessed be God, it has been impressed on me by all the various scenes of grief and sympathy with which I have been lately conversant:—How great, how glorious, are the supports and consolations of true Christianity! Its very sorrows and humiliations bear about them a character of purity and dignity more than human. Its very griefs are more really joyful and hopeful, and hence more soothing and cordially cheering to the mind, than the greatest of merely earthly pleasures, or the most abundant measure of sublunary prosperity. I beg my kind remembrances to Mrs. C. and my friendly regards to all our common friends. Farewell.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, February 13, 1815.

My dear Friend,

Thornton, Bowdler, Buchanan: the blows come thick upon each other. How wounding to the heart! how awakening to the soul! I dare not expatiate. I should not write to day, being so very unwell, but to acknowledge the receipt of the half bill. How rejoiced should I be, after what you said of the insolvency of your tenants, to have returned it, but I am in some little danger of bankruptcy myself. I thank God my personal resources are increased, but my foreign ones are almost entirely cut off. I will explain myself when I am better able to write, and you (if that time should ever arrive) at more leisure to read. In the mean time I ought, for the sake of your feelings, to say that I shall be able to get on this year, and I may not live to another. The bounties of Providence have been too constantly abun-

dant to me ever to admit of distrust. I will never have more of you.

What a mercy, and I bless God for it, that you did not go to the funeral. I am told it probably cost Dr. Buchanan his life. His removal too! O what room for meditation! God seems to take away these human props, to bring us to bear more entirely on himself. Take care of your health. You do not say you are better. I hope you don't go to the House. As Knox once said to me, "Let the dead bury their dead." God bless you!

Pray sometimes for
Your affectionate,
H. MORE.

DR. MIDDLETON, BISHOP OF CALCUTTA, TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Calcutta, February 18, 1815.

My dear Sir,

The intercourse with which you honoured me before I left England, and the memorials of your vigorous mind and immortal labours, which I see before me on the shelves of my library, induce me to hope that you will not consider a letter from me as an unwelcome intrusion. I landed at this place on the 28th November, after a voyage of five months and a half, not accompanied with any circumstances of danger, yet not leaving behind it any pleasing recollections. My reception here was such as I had reason to expect from the well known fears which prevail at home with regard to Hindoo prejudices, and the reserve which it is thought necessary to maintain upon all subjects connected with our religion. These fears, I can already take upon me to affirm, are wholly groundless; and I suspect that the unblushing manner in which we betray them, has not raised us in the estimation of the natives: they cannot understand why we should be ashamed of our religion any more than they are of theirs; and the common remark was,

when they heard that a Bishop was to be sent to India, "We wonder that you did not send one long since: you have a head of your army and of your law, and of every thing but your religion." In truth, they are the most tolerant people in the world: they would not suffer us to violate their temples, but they reverence all persons invested with a religious character, and that too in proportion to the consideration shown them by persons of the same faith.

The withholding, however, of those marks of honour,* which are usually granted to persons in public stations on their arrival in this country, was a less serious evil than the want of a house. When I reached the mouth of the Ganges, I learnt from some visitors, who came on board our ship, that I had long been expected, but that nobody knew whither I was to go when I reached Calcutta; and true it was, that no residence had been provided for me: however, I received a very friendly invitation from Mr. Seton of the Supreme Council, for myself and my party; and I was obliged to trespass on his hospitality, which indeed I shall ever remember with gratitude, for full two months, from my inability to meet with a suitable house. This circumstance, together with the inadequacy of my salary, has attracted considerable attention; 5000*l.* per annum, though in England it may seem to be a large sum, is not here an income which carries with it any impressions of respect; nor is it on a level with the salaries paid to those who are less liable than the Bishop to the demands of charity, and to calls of a public nature. The judges are paid at a better rate of exchange than that which has been adopted for the Bishop, who thus receives upwards of 4000*l.* per annum less than the chief justice of Bengal, and about 2000*l.* less than the puisne judges. The archdeaconries at 2000*l.* per annum are probably in proportion to the bishopric. The Bishop is in future to collate to these preferments from among the Company's chaplains; but the senior chaplains, who are probably in general the

* Vide Le Bas's *Life of Middleton*, vol. i. p. 75.

fittest to be archdeacons, could not in any of the presidencies, without great sacrifice of emolument, accept the appointment. But though enough has not been done to give weight and efficiency to the new establishment, I have no reason to infer that it will have to encounter any prejudice: the general feeling seems to be in its favour. From the members of the government I have received every individual attention, and they are evidently disposed to do every thing in their power to aid me in my undertaking; and I have noticed among the inhabitants of the settlements some sacrifices to propriety, which they had never before been called upon to make, but which have yet been made very cheerfully: a masquerade had been announced for the day after Ash Wednesday; but so soon as it was understood that Lent would be observed, and that there would be prayers every Wednesday and Friday, the masquerade was abandoned in a manner which caused me to rejoice that it had been contemplated—it was by a public advertisement, specifically assigning the reason. At the theatre, also, where the performance used to be on Fridays, the day is changed during Lent. I hail these as very happy omens.

I have here a very beautiful church, and I find it in admirable order. I preached in it for the first time on Christmas Day, and it was probably the most memorable day of my life. The congregation was numbered, as is the practice here, and amounted to 1300 persons: they heard me with attention for nearly an hour, after which we collected for the poor about 700*l.*, and 160 persons stayed to receive the sacrament. It was altogether as impressive a spectacle as ever I beheld.

Since my arrival my time has been too much occupied with receiving and paying visits, in looking out for a house, and in getting settled, to allow me to pay much attention to a variety of topics, on which I am anxious to be well informed. On my voyage, however, I read your “Speeches upon the Moral Improvement, &c. of the Natives of India;” and I am fully convinced, from all which I have heard on the spot, that your views of

Hindoo morality are much more just than many persons will allow them to be in England. An expression which fell from Sir James Mackintosh in a charge given at Bombay, was treated as a solitary testimony to the falsehood and prevarication of witnesses in courts of justice: but in conversations which I have had with judges and barristers of the supreme court, with the judges of the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut, and with the magistrates of provincial courts, I find that their experience has led to the same conclusion, that the Hindoos have no feeling of any religious or moral obligation to truth; and the concurring depositions of three or four witnesses are not received as satisfactory evidence, unless when they are corroborated by circumstances, which are beyond the reach of fraud and imposture.

All this is quite familiar to the minds of people here; and I have heard much wonder expressed that the fact should be disputed in Europe. I do not, however, altogether despair of the Hindoos. I have had visits from several of the most opulent who reside at this presidency, and I find them extremely ready to converse both upon morals and religion. On the latter subject they are quite afloat: they seem not to know precisely what they should believe, though they freely admit that the prevailing usages of Brahminism are destitute of all authority; they appear for the most part to be Deists. One of them told me that men of sense in all countries had the same religion, and that in reality his Shaster and mine were the same. The best symptom which I have remarked is, that an idea is gaining ground among them that they should derive advantage from being instructed in our arts and literature; and they are beginning to talk of schools. I am expecting from Benares a Hindoo project upon that subject. If they once become generally instructed in the elements of our knowledge, and the Brahmins could be provided for, Christianity, I doubt not, would follow. But considering what sacrifices we demand, and how few we have made, I really think that the propagation of Christianity in India is as extensive as we could possibly expect. If, however, I have

leisure, of which I have no right to expect a large share, I propose to throw together some remarks upon this subject, and I shall take the liberty of troubling you with the result.

An occurrence has just taken place here, of which I fear that no very good use will be made in England. You remember, no doubt, the pathetic story in Dr. Buchanan's book of Sabat. He has been long employed by Mr. Thomason in translating the New Testament into Arabic: he accompanied Mr. T., who is up the country with Lord Moira; but about two months since he made some excuse for coming to Calcutta. About a fortnight ago he published an Arabic volume (which turns out to have been his object in coming hither,) in which he renounces and reviles Christianity in the grossest terms, works up all the objections to it which he could collect, and establishes the truth of the Koran. As to Christianity, he declares that he never believed it, but that he wished to become acquainted with its weakness, and that he was well paid as a translator. Of this work he has published six hundred copies, which he has distributed gratuitously: two of them were sent to gentlemen who were just embarking for England, and one is sent off to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He is returned to Arabia, probably expecting that his zeal for Mohammedanism will recommend him among his countrymen as effectually as his profession of Christianity served his purpose in India.

I find myself engaged in a multitude of very interesting objects, and I see before me an ample field for exertion. In a situation so new it is impossible but that I should have to encounter various difficulties; but I trust, that with the blessing of God and continued health, I shall be able to accomplish somewhat towards the improvement of the state of religion and morals in this country; and if I should be made the instrument of perceptible good, I shall not regret the sacrifices which I made in leaving England. Lord Moira has appointed the 14th of April for a general thanksgiving on account of the peace in Europe, official tidings of which reached

us but six weeks since. Afterwards I purpose to have a confirmation; and towards the approach of the cool season in November, I hope I shall be preparing for my visitation to Madras and Bombay, a voyage of about the same distance as that from England to New York; but after sailing 15,500 miles, it appears to be trifling.

I observe with great pleasure the endeavours which you have used to put an end to the slave trade among other nations: I hope that the general congress will not think the subject undeserving of their deliberation.

I shall be greatly obliged if you will do me the favour to present my compliments to Mrs. Wilberforce, and also to Lord Teignmouth. To Mr. Grant I shall write by this conveyance.

I am, my dear Sir,

With sentiments of the highest respect,
Your much obliged and very faithful servant,

T. F. CALCUTTA.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Near London, July 19, 1815.

My dear Friend,

I cannot tell how it has hurt me to hear that you had been throwing out a plaint of never hearing from me, in such a way as to indicate the wounding of the friendly heart from which it came. If I had written to you as often as I have thought of you, I can truly say you would have had no more frequent correspondent. But alas, my friend, think of my situation. Truly I may say with Falstaff, though I trust with some difference, (I feel however as if I were guilty of Falstaff's selfishness in making the remark,) Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me. Men! ay, and women too. For it is not twenty-four hours since a young female of twenty came into my library, whose first words when we were alone were, "I have run away, Mr. Wilberforce." And a long piece of business have I had with this young fugitive whose companion, however, I am assured is of her own sex—her maid-servant. But the

truth is, I have been and still am in a continual state of struggling to prevent my sinking into an abyss of unanswered letters, unread papers, unfinished business. I am like a man hunted on all sides by his creditors, and striving in vain to stop the growing accumulation, if not to pay off the old arrears. Pity me therefore, my good friend, instead of blaming me—take my part rather—defend me against myself—put me again into good humour with myself.

I have been for some time about to state to you that I was coming with W. and a young friend of his into your neighbourhood for a tour, and that I certainly could not resist the attraction of Barley Wood. I am just now trying to wind up matters, in order to enable me to quit this place; but new claims are continually recurring. Let me not however run off again into the same lamentation. What events have we witnessed both in public and private life! Poor Whitbread, what a close, alas! He was certainly however deranged. But oh, how does all enforce on us the important truth that we must acquaint ourselves with God to be at peace! Hoping ere long to see you, I will not now enlarge. Farewell, my dear friend, believe me,

Ever yours sincerely and affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS THORNTON.

Kensington Gore, Friday, October 20, 1815.

My dear M.,

I cannot tell you how much I value your most kind present:* it shall be preserved amongst my choicest treasures. The very author is my prime favourite; but one of the very best of his works, which had so long been the closet companion of so dear a friend, and at such a time, presented to me by such a donor, and with

* A copy of "Baxter's Saints' Rest," which had belonged to the late Mrs. Thornton.

such language,—the whole makes up a mass of causes for attachment which exceed all calculation, much more all words to express. It is, perhaps, well that I take up my pen at a time when I have scarcely a minute at command; indeed, at first, I did not mean to touch on the topic which alone has hitherto occupied me; but my feelings hurried me away. I meant merely to state that unless my sister was worse to-morrow I would bring R. over to dinner by about half-past four o'clock, and stay all night if you can bed us. I must break off. May God bless and keep you.

Ever your most affectionate friend,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD LIVERPOOL.

Brighton, November 22, 1815.

My dear Lord Liverpool,

I almost blame myself for not having sooner written to your Lordship on the subject of this letter. I delayed, that I might at the same time address you on another topic: but I can no longer forbear expressing to you the grief and shame with which I have heard, since I had the pleasure of conferring with your Lordship in London, of the savage persecution of the Protestants in the south of France. I remember you said you were expecting further intelligence, and I have partly abstained from troubling you, trusting that your attention was already directed to the object. But silence may be misconstrued into want of sympathy; and both for myself, and for all whom I have heard mention the subject, I can truly declare that on none did I ever witness deeper concern and indignation.

From more places than one applications have been made to me with an eye to public meetings. I am aware, however, how undesirable it is to take any step which would call into fermentation the old hostility between Protestantism and Popery: in Ireland, especially, the consequences might be injurious; indeed, there is no

saying where the evil might end, especially if we consider that one of our allies, Austria, is Roman Catholic. Yet but a very little exertion would cause the Protestant flame to burst forth throughout the whole of this island, and it would burn brightest, probably, in the north of it. There are many, however, who are not deaf to the voice of prudence, and who, if they could be privately assured that our government was using its influence in earnest with the court of France, to induce the latter to put down with a strong arm the scandalous outrages on the persons and property of the Protestants, would be content, for the present at least, to wait the effect of its efforts. Let me beg the favour of a few lines from your Lordship, as soon as you can favour me with them, on this interesting subject, as several friends are waiting for communications from me.

The other matter I will leave for the present, only adding that the account, which subsequently to my interview with you has reached me, that the French Abolition is not secured by being made a part of the treaty, like the former qualified Abolition, would have forced me to trouble you on the subject again, but for the assurances your Lordship kindly gave me, that our great object should be made sure by a direct stipulation or positive recognition in the treaty with France. Reposing on your assurance I have dismissed anxiety on that head.

I remain always,

My dear Lord Liverpool,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH.

Brighton, December 10, 1815.

My dear Lord Sidmouth,

I am so earnestly entreated to apply to you about some poor black men that are wandering about London half, or literally more than half, starved with cold and hunger, that I cannot well refuse. Yet I am perfectly

convinced that the object pointed out to you by any one on whose representations you could place any reliance, would receive the same attention as when named to you by myself. But I think you cannot have lived to our age without having had requests made to you, to which you could not well say no, and to which, nevertheless, you could scarcely say yes with propriety. . . .

And now, on this head, what shall I say more ?

It is happy for you, however, that it is on Sunday that I am called on to address you, when of course I confine myself to the matter of charity or necessity, which compels me to take up my pen ; otherwise, it is so long since I interchanged a word with you, that I should be strongly tempted to trespass pretty freely on your time. As it is, however, I will only express my hope that you and yours are all as well, at least, as usual. About a month ago I heard a breathing of an amendment in a quarter, where, I will not say I should rejoice in it as much, but as sincerely as yourself. Yet, even in this afflicting dispensation, it is an unspeakable support and comfort to have reason to believe, first, that the event did not happen fortuitously ; and, secondly, that the character of the chief sufferer was such as to afford those who loved him most just reason to believe that the stroke was medicinal and remedial, not judicial ; in love, and not in anger or punishment. By and by these mysteries of Providence shall be cleared up. I have had, you probably may have heard, to attend the dying bed of another friend, the widow of my friend Thornton. But I cannot omit naming to you one circumstance which I, from the connection he has with it, may have mentioned more slightly than it deserves. It pleased the Almighty, in taking from the nine orphans of my friend both their parents to signalize his providence, by raising up in Mr. and Mrs. I. foster-parents only less valuable than their real ones. But while we recognize the Divine hand in such events as these, we ought not less to give the due measure of praise to the human instruments ; and I want words to

express my sense of the various admirable qualities which Mr. and Mrs. I., and their nearest relatives too, have displayed, in volunteering this permanent service. In Sir H. I. it really deserves the name of magnanimity.

But I am, indeed, doing the very thing I disclaimed, trespassing on your time. I believe you are well acquainted with Sir H. I know you think highly of young I.; and that there are few things you relish so much as to hear the just eulogium of your friends.

Permit me to beg my kind remembrances to all your family, and to assure you that I am,

My dear Lord S.,
Your Lordship's very sincerely,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A SON AGED THIRTEEN.

Brighton, Sunday, December 17, 1815.

My dearest —,

Though it is quite contrary to my ordinary practice to write letters on a Sunday, yet having been unable to prepare a few lines for you yesterday, I feel myself warranted, by our blessed Saviour's principles and example in this respect even in the case of the Jewish sabbath, to take up my pen to-day, in order that I may meet my dear boy on his birth-day, with the assurance of his father's tenderest concern for his temporal, and far more for his eternal happiness. O, my dearest boy, could you look into my heart and witness all the anxious thoughts and anxieties that are therein, of which you are the beloved subject; could you hear the earnest prayers that I put up for you,—you would then form a better idea than you now can, of the liveliness, and depth, and force of a father's affectionate solicitude for his much loved child. And on this day especially my prayers are poured forth, that the gracious Father of the spirits of all flesh, who has promised that He will hear the prayers of them that call upon Him,

may hear my supplications on your behalf, that as you have already enjoyed, and still enjoy many advantages which few others possess, you may not at length render them the cause only of your greater condemnation.

It makes me tremble however, sometimes, to reflect on the peculiar degree of your responsibility. Yet why should I despond? I know that God will be faithful to His promises; that He will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask it with sincerity and earnestness. And will not my dear boy thus ask? Has it been already bestowed? I hope it has in some degree. But, O grieve it not. Respect the still small voice of conscience. Try to please your Saviour, by practising daily little acts of self-denial for His sake, since He does not call you to greater sacrifices. Guard against thinking of other things when you are saying your prayers, and try then to feel as if you were in the presence of God and of Jesus Christ. Think of all that Christ suffered for you, and also that He is at this moment earnestly wishing to bring you to heaven, that you may not only escape the flames of hell, but that you may enjoy the unspeakable glories of that blessed state, where is the fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. And when Christ is thus thinking of you, will you not think of Him? Between seven and eight especially, I shall imagine you in your own little room, and also between twelve and one in the day: I shall retire myself into my own room, and pray earnestly for you. Remember, my dear boy, that we do not naturally love God and Christ, and desire above all things to please them as we ought, but we must have this love and desire before we can be admitted into heaven; and the change from the one state to the other must be effected by the Holy Spirit. My heart is very full. I can scarcely refrain from tears, though people are coming into the room; and I shall allow myself to pour them forth by and by for you, with my prayers, when I get alone. May God bless you, my dearest boy: may He enable you to remember your Creator and Redeemer in the days of your youth;

that you may grow up to be the joy of your old father's heart in the days of weakness and decrepitude; and that he may at length meet you in a better world, to part no more for ever. Again and again may God in Christ be your everlasting portion.

Ever, ever yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS THORNTON.

Brighton, December 20, 1815.

Alas! alas, my dear M., with what mixed emotions have I read your most interesting and affectionate letter, for if, on the one hand, I must be void of all—(interrupted for about an hour)—I was going to say I must be void of all feeling. Again interrupted, and when at liberty, forced to go out, to pay two visits of business, and I am come in again just as dinner is about to be announced—and such, I grieve to say, is the too common history of my days, so that of late, instead of clearing away part of an old epistolary arrear, and writing an addition to a Slave Trade piece which is to be translated into Italian for the use of the Pope, I have not even been able to pay my way; that is, every day's post has brought more claims on my pen, than the day has enabled me to satisfy. Add to this, the voluminous West Indian papers printed since the last session, with which, before the next begins, I must be thoroughly acquainted, (only arrived this morning,) and I have to put on the stocks as soon as possible various letters to foreign correspondents, which ought by this time to have been half way to the places of their several destinations. Oh that I could write, and my correspondents read, short hand; I must add, that I could get on with it at your rate of galloping; for I solemnly assure you I speak the truth when I tell you that, though a fast, often I fear too fast a talker, I am always a slow writer, and now, alas! a much slower than I used to be.

And now I might almost adopt for my conclusion

from all these premises the East Indian's close—What shall I say more? More however, much more, I have to say; and I fear the sum of all of it must be, that though wishing, from the bottom of my heart, that I could render the service to the world, and the gratification to many common friends by executing the task* in question, I am almost compelled to abandon the hope which I had gladly welcomed. Perhaps the work which no one pen could execute, might be achieved by a confederacy. If Dealtry, and Charles and Robert Grant (and of course, in every undertaking, Macaulay) would combine their efforts with myself, we might effect something. But . . . worse and worse—the interruptions of this day have at length received their completion, by a summons this evening to the Pavilion. I conceived that, by a friendly intervention with General Bloomfield, I had provided against this evil; and I can only say, that if the invitation is to be repeated, I shall soon say farewell to Brighton. I must break off. Of course, I have received your most interesting parcel. Farewell: every blessing attend you all. Tell Inglis I will write soon.

Ever yours most affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO SAMUEL ROBERTS, ESQ.

Near London, January 25, 1816.

My dear Sir,

I am but very recently returned with my family to this place (Kensington Gore), and am extremely engrossed on my first arrival, owing to my never having been able to come over as usual, and set to rights the accumulated confusion of a whole session, in order to have clear quarters for the next. As to the lottery:—In principle, as I have often told you, I entirely concur with you, and indeed I have again and again expressed my opinion in the very strongest terms. But you ought not

* A Memoir of Mr. Henry Thornton.

to forget that the amount of the evil is very considerably lessened, as I believe, by the regulations introduced to prevent insuring. At the same time, I confess—rather I contend—that the thing, being vicious in principle, ought to be altogether relinquished.

I dare not make any engagement to take up this subject, because I am pre-engaged to another grievance, if I may use a word implying unity, to denote a whole long series of physical and moral evils; but I will sound other friends who are like-minded. I shall be animated to proceed, if there be any prospect of success; but I remember, too well, that the last time we opposed the lottery, when my friend, Mr. Babington, the excellent M. P. for Leicester, spoke at much length, and with great knowledge of his subject, we had a smaller minority than on any other occasion. And when there is no prospect of success, and when our opinion has been declared again and again with the utmost solemnity, it scarcely seems advisable to employ on any evil that time and trouble which, otherwise directed, might be productive of practical benefit.

I hope our friends in your circle are well. I have felt a greatly increased interest in James Montgomery, since I heard of him from some friends of mine who passed through Sheffield, in the autumn of 1814. But I am sadly neglecting several most pressing claims of business, and must abruptly subscribe myself, with every friendly wish, my dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Kensington Gore, February 1, 1816.

My dear Friend,

Many and cordial thanks for your long letter. It is just what I wanted to receive—an account of the absent friend and her goings on: and on the spot I take up my pen to begin an answer, which shall be

completed piecemeal, as opportunities shall offer. You mention my reception at the Pavilion: nothing could be more gracious; I should rather say, more unaffectedly gentlemanlike. He personally invited me to dine with him, desiring me to fix my day; and when, of course, I expressed myself willing on any day,—“Well, then, to-morrow. I assure you,” he added, “you will hear at my table nothing you will disapprove: I hope, indeed, at no time; but if ever there did any thing of that sort pass, there should be nothing of it when you should be with me.” He invited, as I afterwards heard accidentally, Lord Ellenborough to meet me, and was really quite the English gentleman at the head of his table. Poor fellow! I longed to have a private half hour with him; for it is sad work. Dinner comes on table at six; at nine the dinner party goes into the other rooms, in one of which is music, in another cards, in others, and a long gallery 160 feet long, walking about, till about a quarter or half-past twelve, and then, on the Prince’s retiring, all of us depart. But really it is a large part of existence, from six to half-past twelve daily, or rather nightly.

The Princess Charlotte is a fine fair German looking personage, with a sensible countenance and a commanding air. I believe, but nothing certain was known, that there is foundation for the report of her being likely to become the wife of Prince Cobourg, a very handsome foreigner, of high blood, and, which is better, no dominions. By the way, I forgot the civilest part of all the Prince’s conduct towards me. Finding invitations to the evening parties come pretty thick upon me, I mentioned one evening to Bloomfield, that evening engagements broke in upon my family plans; that I was at Brighton for a quiet life, my boys at home, &c.; and that, though highly honoured and gratified (really true) by His Royal Highness’s kindnesses, I wished to decline frequent invitations. The Prince himself was told of it, and, in the handsomest way possible, begged me to suit my own convenience: he should always be happy to see me, &c. I am forced to break off, indeed I have kept

this by me for two or three days in the hopes of a vacant evening; but I had better send it than keep it any longer. Oh, how I sympathize with good old Baxter in feeling peculiar pity for the great and high of the earth! May God's best blessings attend you. Kindest remembrances.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Wednesday morning.

My dear Stephen,

I have been quite uneasy since we parted, from the fear of my not having treated you with the same affectionate disposition to conform to your wishes, which you always show to conform to mine, or even to anticipate them. Yet I must do myself the justice of saying, that I am not conscious of any selfish wish to consult my own inclinations rather than yours; but I have sometimes thought, when you ask me whether I had rather do such a thing, or the contrary, that I answer with more strict truth than is commonly practised, or than you, from living in the world, are used to. (But I must not write so early in the day, and you perhaps may not quite understand me.) As to coming to you to-morrow, if I knew what you really wished, it would give me pleasure to do it. So observant are you of every opportunity of promoting my comfort, it would be shocking, if even in such little *petitesses* as these, I had not real pleasure in consulting your wishes. So honestly tell me what you wish, and I shall be gratified by acting accordingly.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO CHARLES GRANT, ESQ.

Kensington Gore, Friday evening, April 19, 1816.

My dear Friend,

Though I thank God I am considerably better, yet I have now and then such sensations as indicate to me but too clearly that I am not yet well. And I am the more disposed to take care of myself, from the hope that by a little more nursing I may be once more fit for my ordinary labours. I congratulate you on being out of harness, and I trust I shall now and then see a little of you, since you will no longer be imprisoned in the India House.

I feel the importance of the subject of your letter; and I will request of Lord Liverpool the interview you suggest. But I think there are many reasons why it would be desirable that you should accompany me. Lord Liverpool may be supposed to have some official dread of any one whom he may deem so much of a theorist as myself, and therefore to counteract that impression, and to prove to them that my sentiments and feelings on the subject in question may be participated by a gentleman who is as well acquainted with India as yourself, it may be highly serviceable for you to accompany me. I must not, however, use your name till you authorize me so to do. But if you will give me leave I will write to Lord Liverpool in both our names, and desire him to appoint a time for seeing us. My dear Sir, though we meet so seldom, I can truly assure you that you and yours possess a secure place in my heart; and our not seeing more of each other is a standing grievance with me. Farewell, my dear Sir.

I am,

Ever your affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

THE BISHOP OF CALCUTTA, DR. MIDDLETON, TO WM.
WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bombay, June 21, 1816.

My dear Sir,

I have within these few days been favoured with your obliging letter of the 30th of November. The latter part of it, in which I am personally interested, though your candour induces you to consider the point referred to as a public concern, I will dismiss as briefly as possible. Since I had the pleasure of writing to you, I have had some experience of the value of money here, and of the demands to which the Bishop is liable, most of which, if it be his duty to recommend and support the cause of Christianity, he ought rather to encourage than repel. It seems not to have been considered that the person called the Bishop of Calcutta is in truth also Bishop of Madras and of Bombay, and of every place in this vast empire, where Christian institutions require his support, or distress solicits his assistance; and after travelling, as I now have done, through a considerable part of India, to make myself acquainted with the true state of things, I am convinced, that in hardly any station in the world is more good to be accomplished by adequate means, than in that to which Providence has called me. I am well aware that the most ample means may be alienated to the purposes of avarice, and that there can be no security for their proper application. You do me the honour to believe that this inconvenience is not to be apprehended in my own individual instance, and I hope that you judge rightly. I am very little able to enter into the views or feelings of any man, who, in such a situation, and especially not having a family, should find nothing more captivating to his imagination than the prospect of accumulating a fortune. But of this more than enough.

I reached this place on my visitation about five weeks since, having left Calcutta in December, and thence proceeded by sea to Madras, and by land through Pondicherry, Tranquebar, Tanjore, and by Cape Comorin,

through Travancore to Cochin, where I embarked for Bombay; and by the time I reach Calcutta again, my visitation will have carried me, by sea and by land, 5000 miles. My land journey through the south of India has been very interesting to me; and though the country is in general dreary, and some fatigue attends travelling, however slow the progress, in this languid climate, I would not willingly forego the recollection of what I have seen and observed. You are aware that the native Protestant Christianity of this country is nearly confined to the parts I have visited, and it attracted a great share of my attention. These Christians are in general very well taught, and are able to give at least as satisfactory an account of their faith as the lower classes of people in England: they are intelligent, humble, decent in their demeanour, and regular in their habits; and I think that Christianity is visibly a blessing to them, even without any reference to futurity. It is natural to ask, is this blessing so well appreciated, as to be in the course of more general diffusion? and I really must acknowledge, that I have not observed any thing which can encourage such a hope, at least to any great extent. Very few of these Christians are converts, but are the sons and grandsons of converts, and there are circumstances, not perhaps so strongly felt in the days of their progenitors, which, though they do not produce apostacy, are of sufficient force to operate against conversion. We are now the acknowledged sovereigns of this vast region, and the natives seem to ascribe to us a power even beyond that which we actually possess. In this state of things, they have no idea that we are restrained by prudential motives, from giving to Christianity any degree of encouragement and support which we may think it deserves; and they know that the Mussulmans, even in places where their power was not firmly established, did always plant their religion, however violent and unjustifiable were the means. This difference of conduct induces a comparison; and if the result was only that it impressed them with the tolerant spirit of our faith, it would be well; but it goes much

further. A learned Brahmin told me in Bengal, that "the English did not wish the natives to become converts to Christianity;" and he justified his remark, by adverting to the very little which we had done to show our religion. The Brahmin's opinion, I have little doubt, is that of every thinking man among the Hindoos; and they are led to question the strength or the existence of that conviction, which is apparently so indifferent about convincing others, and so backward in showing favour to those who are actually convinced.

I receive a multitude of addresses from the Christians in the south; but they generally turn upon one or both of these two points,—they request to be employed under a Christian government, and they seek to be exempted from drawing the rutt, or idol-car, in the pagan procession. As to the former, it is certainly true, that though the profession of Christianity is not by any means a formal disqualification for the subordinate offices filled by natives, very few native Christians are actually employed. I have conversed with several gentlemen, who have the disposal of such appointments, with the view of recommending the Christians to their notice; and I remarked that the ground of rejection has usually been, either an opinion that the Christians are very undeserving, or an unwillingness to invest persons with authority whom the other natives would not respect. I can account for this only by supposing, that the vices of one class of converts have been charged indiscriminately on all. The Popish converts are generally very exceptionable, and unhappily they are, even in the south of India, perhaps as three to one Protestant, so that the name of Christian convert is not in good report; besides that it is not asked whether any man be himself a convert, or of a family which has been Christian for three or four generations. As to dragging the rutt, it is indeed a sore grievance: one man told me that he was severely beaten every year on the occasion of a great heathen festival for refusing to assist, but that he would rather die. In the removal of this complaint there may be some difficulty. In taking possession of territory, we guarantied to the pensioned

princes the integrity of their religion, of which these festivals and processions are the principal part; and the rutts are so enormously large and heavy, that they require the whole male population of a village to drag them along, and the people, without reference to their religion, are bound to perform this service by a sort of feudal tenure. I have not had time to inquire fully what can be done in this business, but it is a subject of great triumph to the heathen, as well as of discouragement to the Christians; and these two considerations—I mean the want of employment and the want of toleration (for so these poor people very naturally regard it)—are well calculated to operate against conversion among the lower classes; from whom, however, it is too true, for the present, that the only converts are made. As to the higher orders, they know very little about our religion, and that little excites no interest. Many of them will hardly believe that we have a religion, and even when they are assured to the contrary, they proceed not to inquire what it is, but merely add it to the list of superstitions, of which they had heard before, all of which they maintain have one common object, and really mean the same thing. The surprising apathy of these people, and their want of all curiosity, is one of the most unfortunate circumstances in their character. There is within three miles of this place a populous Hindoo village, many of the oldest inhabitants of which, as I am assured, never visited Bombay. Many similar facts are within my knowledge, and they are not unimportant: they prove that we have to act upon a torpor of intellect, which we must dispel before any thing else can be done. “The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing,” is a fine description of the frame of mind which is ardent in pursuit of knowledge; but it is totally inapplicable to the Hindoo.

You have shown, however, in a kindred cause, that difficulties may be great without being insuperable, and that wherever good is the object we ought not to despair. I do not think, so far as I can judge, that the present case is desperate, provided the proper means be adopted;

though even then I have no hope that any great and general result may be expected by us of the present generation. You have a stupendous fabric to overthrow: its foundations are broad and deep; its high antiquity excites veneration. The few who possess any knowledge are interested in protecting it; and implicit obedience to all which they teach is incorporated with the public institutions, and interwoven with the feelings and associations of the vulgar from their earliest childhood. The first object probably which attracts the eye of an infant is some ridiculous form, which he is taught to regard as an object of homage and awe. Against a system thus firmly compacted no great success was to be expected from any thing which has hitherto been done. We have had no church establishment which was deserving of the name; our places of Christian worship have been few, and generally very mean; our toleration has been such as to be mistaken for complete indifference; the missionaries who have come out are known to be unaccredited by the government; and the minds of the people, owing to the decay of native institutions and our failing to substitute any thing in their place, are said to be buried in deeper ignorance than they were two centuries ago. If this statement, then, be generally correct, our efforts should be directed to two points: we should exhibit our religion to the natives without reserve; and we should endeavour to remove the prejudices which prevent their seeing it in its true light; and if political considerations stand in the way of either of these, I fear that the glory of christianizing India is not designed by Providence for our nation.

In the view of exhibiting our religion, our church establishment should bear some proportion to the power and dignity of the mother-country; for else we seem to tell the natives, that, even in our own estimation, our religion is a subordinate concern: our clergy should be more numerous, and should have a respectable rank in society, instead of being placed below lieutenants and surgeons, and all but writers. Handsome churches should be seen wherever we have civil or military estab-

lishments; and we should incorporate into our churches the native Christians in the south, (who, I believe, would gladly join in our communion,) by building them churches, which they exceedingly want, and giving our ordination to their native priests, with some means of support. Our endeavour should be to form congregations wherever we can, and to build them churches, rather than to confine ourselves to the small number both of churches and of clergy, which is indispensably required. And if, without holding out a bribe to conversion, we should show that we regarded with some feeling of interest, not perhaps new converts, but the Christian sons of converts, we should at least remove one source of discouragement.

But still there would be need of attending to the other point suggested—that of dispelling their prejudices, which prevent the natives from seeing our religion in its true light; for merely to see it would be insufficient: and this must be chiefly by education. As to giving them a Christian education at once, it would evidently, if it were practicable, be all that is required; but it is out of the question. The utmost which can be done is to found schools, in which, with the elements of useful knowledge, children should learn our language; and from this latter acquisition, though the English books in use contained not a syllable upon Christianity, I should anticipate important results. Between the English and the native languages there is not more difference than between our modes of thinking and theirs upon the common questions of life: our facts, our inferences, our remarks, our good sense, and our practical application of our knowledge, are things quite foreign to the native mind, and could hardly find their way thither without rendering it a very unfit recipient for what is usually obtruded on it as sacred truth. The question is, whether schools of this kind would find pupils? and I think it is the general opinion that they would, at least at the presidencies and principal stations, especially if proficiency in the English language were made a qualification. Something of this kind is now

projected at Calcutta, under the patronage of the government, to be called the Hindoo College of Calcutta, for teaching Bengalee and English to 300 children. I regret that I am absent; though, for obvious reasons, it might not be expedient that I should take an active part in it. As to the translating and dissemination of the Scriptures in the native languages, though it can hardly fail of some effect, I am led to infer that more is expected from it than is really warranted by the circumstances of this country. The native mind is not sufficiently advanced to be benefited by it in a great degree: the adult has a great deal to unlearn before he can learn any thing else; and the Bible Society, both at Columbo and at this place, has been obliged to declare that schools and elementary tracts must be the first objects of attention.

I find, however, that my letter is proceeding to an unreasonable length, and I must be more brief upon topics of less importance. When I left Calcutta it was my intention to pass some time in the country of the Syrian Christians; but when I reached Travancore, the season was so far advanced, that no time was to be lost before I embarked for this place. I stayed at Cochin, however, three or four days, and had a visit from the Syrian Bishop, attended by several of his clergy. I had the pleasure of presenting him with a copy of the Oxford edition of the "Philoxenian Version of the New Testament," of which neither the Bishop nor his clergy seemed even to have heard; they are, indeed, in so depressed a state, that the wonder is that they possess any learning at all; though this defect promises to be remedied by a school or college under the patronage of the resident, Colonel Munro. In return for my present the Bishop has engaged to superintend the transcribing by some of his clergy of a complete liturgy and ritual of his church, which I am anxious to examine, as the only authentic mode of judging what their tenets really are. I have no expectation of finding them to be in so close resemblance with those of the Church of England as Dr. Buchanan has led people to suppose. They acknow-

ledge seven sacraments, and in their forms of worship, as well as in those of the Greek and Armenian churches, there is a great deal to which we English Protestants should object. The further, indeed, we look into these matters, the better shall we be satisfied with the Church of England. Still, however, the Malabar Syrians are an interesting people, and I wish to become better acquainted with their actual condition; for which reason I purpose to touch at Cochin on my return, and to employ a fortnight in getting together all the information I can. The Bishop has lent me, in the mean time, some liturgical MSS., that I may not be altogether a stranger to his doctrines; but hitherto I have been so much taken up with more important business, that I have scarcely glanced at their contents. In truth I find my situation in India to be almost any thing rather than one of literary leisure and inquiry.

I am well acquainted with Mr. Grant's Essays on the Hindoos, which furnishes, I really think, the best information on the subject which is to be obtained in England; and even in India a great deal of research would be requisite before any important additions could be made to what Mr. Grant has collected. You advert also to the public disputation in Persia with the late Mr. Martyn: it is unfortunate that Mohammedism does not depend upon argument for its support, else it would have disappeared from the earth long since, with all other false religions; for I take Christianity to be the only religion in the world which rests upon what we call Evidences. By the way, what a religion is Mohammedism as a rule of life! I have been looking through Sir J. Malcolm's "History of Persia,"—a very interesting book, especially to a person who is now within a few hundreds of miles of the Persian coast: but what horrors does he detail in the lives of many very strict followers of the Prophet! The last King of Persia, Aga Mahommed, was absolutely a monster; and yet we are told that, whatever had been the fatigues of the day, he uniformly rose at midnight to offer his devotions as prescribed by his religion. I much question whether a

twentieth part of such atrocity be compatible with the loosest profession of Christianity, or could even subsist in a country where Christianity is acknowledged ; and I am disposed to think, when I reflect on the unfeeling character of Buonaparte, that he has been saved from the perpetration of still greater enormities by not having been born in the East. If he had been brought up in Persia, and in the religion of Mohammed, I see no reason to doubt that he would have rivalled the very worst of the heroes of Sir J. Malcolm's history.

You have heard, no doubt, of the difficulties into which we are brought here, in consequence of sending out Scotch chaplains. Such a measure might, in England, be made very plausible, but nothing could be more needless or more mischievous. The Scots here are, indeed, very numerous : many of these are Episcopalians, but many more were Presbyterians ; but they had generally adopted, and appeared to be perfectly satisfied with the Church of England ; and they were not less likely to be satisfied with it because irregularities were to be corrected, and better order established by a provision of the legislature. The experiment, however, was not tried : a Scotch chaplain came out in the same ship with me, and others followed him ; and it is peculiarly unfortunate that he thought it his duty at the commencement of his career to open a battery against the Church of England, and to declare that "the church in India," meaning his own church, is a legal establishment. He still persists in the same claims. He holds kirk sessions, (a thing, I believe, unknown in the dioceses of England and Wales,) and publishes their orders in the newspapers ; and he has lately begun to solemnize marriages. In these proceedings he appears to meet with no check in this quarter ; though if any clergyman under my jurisdiction had attacked Presbyterianism on this gentleman's arrival, and had merely denied of it what he has affirmed, I should certainly have marked such indiscretion with my strongest censure. The affair gives me great concern, and it is impossible not to anticipate the consequences. The English and the Scotch

in India had hitherto been as one church and one nation, and it was not desirable to tell them that they were really distinct. We are too few to afford to be divided, and especially to be divided without a boundary. I understand from Calcutta that the spirit of dissension is already abroad there, and is producing its usual fruits; and if it is to be maintained, nothing worse could have happened for the interests of Christianity: every difference among Christians in this country is a diversion in favour of the false religions.

You will be pleased to hear that I have succeeded in establishing Committees of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge at the three Presidencies. We have remitted above 1000*l.* to the Parent Society; and I am sanguine in the hope that the books to be sent out to us will find their way into barracks, hospitals, gaols, and schools throughout India. I have reason to believe that there are English regiments without a single Prayer-Book.

I hope we shall not hear of any mutiny in the south of India for the next twelve months, as there are persons who would lay the blame upon my visitation. All that I know is, that the Brahmins were everywhere very civil to me, and I to them; and that, in one place, a deputation of them waited upon me, considering that I was invested with a religious character, to request me to obtain for them from the government a larger allowance for the expenses of their pagoda.

I am much pleased with this place. The town is but indifferent, but the harbour is very beautiful; and the Governor here, Sir Evan Nepean, is ready to afford me his aid in every Christian object. He is, indeed, a valuable man, and his example has produced great good in this settlement.

I have the honour to be, my dear Sir,

With the truest respect,

Your most obliged and faithful servant,

T. F. CALCUTTA.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, July 25, 1816.

My dear Sir,

* * * I have sent to inquire if Mr. Francis be at Keswick. It is not two years since your excellent friend Mr. J. Bowdler was here, and after a day, which I am sure all the party at one time must have remembered as among those which were eminently delightful, I dined with him and poor John Calthorpe in the kitchen of an old farm-house. They are gone! and I who survive them have survived also my best earthly hopes and highest earthly enjoyments. They only who knew me in my daily habits can imagine, or believe, how great has been the extent of my loss, or how it is possible that a child of ten years should have been so entirely the companion, as well as pupil, of his father. I was recovering my Greek in the process of teaching Herbert; we were learning German together, and were to have begun Saxon in the same manner, as soon as the Saxon Chronicle should have been published. For his age, there was no better Latin scholar; in Greek, he was fit for the fifth form at Westminster; and he was acquiring with little expense of time, and no trouble, the French and Spanish. With all these acquirements going on, his life was like a continued holiday; so much was it his disposition and mine to mingle sport with study, and find recreation in all things. He was the constant companion of my walks, and felt as much interest in my pleasures as I did in his. His disposition was as beautiful as his intellect, and therefore I had ever an ominous apprehension that he was not intended to grow up on earth, where it was not possible that his nature could be improved, and but too certain that it must, in some degree, be sullied. The feeling which thus prepared me for this privation has not been without its use in enabling me to submit to it with resignation. I hope and believe that I have borne this affliction as it becomes a Christian. The stoicism which I endeavoured to practise in youth (and not without signal benefit) might

have supported, but it could not have consoled me. My heart is weaned from the world, and the brightest spot in the prospect before me is where the light from heaven shines upon the grave. Yet do not imagine that I give way to sorrow, or indulge in vain retrospects and guilty regret. "The Lord gave; the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Never were these words pronounced with more heartfelt sincerity than when I repeated them in the most painful scenes and moments of my life. I am thankful for the abundant blessings which I still possess; but of all things most thankful for having possessed a son whom I loved so entirely, who was so entirely worthy to be loved, and whom I shall one day rejoin.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Respectfully and truly yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH.

Hastings, December 14, 1816.

My dear Lord S.,

I have long been wishing for some plea for troubling you with a letter, having been disappointed of the pleasure I had promised myself of accepting your kind invitation to Richmond Park during this recess. If you recollect my family circumstances during the very little time I have been near London, you will the less wonder at this inability. I assure you it is not want of inclination; there are now very few indeed left with whom I can even talk over the old scenes about their interior; very few, indeed, who are at all acquainted with the real particulars of it.

But I will put on a separate paper the business on which I have to address the Secretary of State, though I did not mean so to do when I took up my pen. Let me only add, that in passing through town, or halting at Kensington Gore for a very few days, had I foreseen I could not afford to accept your friendly invitation, I

should have tried to obtain even a quarter of an hour of you at your office to hear about matters which the newspapers do not mention.

I hope all your family are well with one exception. It is, indeed, a most afflicting, may I not add, a most mysterious dispensation! But I really have no doubt whatever (I have distinct ideas in my mind when I make the assertion) that it will hereafter appear to have been for the party's real good, and if so, how little will it signify, or rather, how little will it appear to have signified some few thousands of ages hence, whether the progress of this particular specimen of moral vegetation was suddenly chilled and arrested, or whether it had been suffered to proceed from the interesting beauty of its early bloom, to the rich maturity of its fruitage; for never let us forget that grand consideration in the estimate of such cases, that we have to do with a Being who sees events in their causes, and effects in their tendencies, who, in short, to use a homely but expressive phrase, which I am sure I do not feel that I am using irreverently, will take the will for the deed. Few passages of Scripture have sometimes comforted me more in this view than that where the Almighty is represented as having said to David, when the offer to build a temple was refused, (I have been at the trouble of looking out the passage; it is 1 Kings viii. 18.) "Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto My name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart." I am persuaded I need not make the application (in writing to you) of this passage to the class of cases to which I was above alluding. How probable is it, I often think, that it will then appear (I mean then, when all the mysteries of divine providence shall be developed), that the individual, the loss of whose future usefulness we have deplored, has been saved from some unforeseen evil which might have befallen him, to his grievous suffering at least,—perhaps to the impairing of his moral principles. How little, when I began, did I intend to spend either your time or my own, as I have been doing; but I am sure you will require no apology for my sending what I have written out of

the fulness of my heart. I will only add, that I am ever,

My dear Lord S.,

Yours, very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

6, Widcombe Terrace, Bath, January 1, 1817.

My dear Wilberforce,

Your kindness will, I dare say, make you anxious to have a line from me to-day. I am, blessed be God, free from pain, and, I think, every way better; but I cannot, like you, find spirits for conversation and work too. The former is a great effort with me, and exhausts and unfits me for the other. It is your easy chair; it is my plough and pickaxe. My only adequate refreshment after desk labour is light reading, or solitary musing in a walk. The many kind suggestions, therefore, which you gave in a late letter about friends in or near Bath were strong dissuasions with me from going there. I mean to be a hermit, and I want nothing now but a little working health to be very comfortable. My lodgings (or rather my house, for I have a whole one,) are quite delightful both within and without. The scene from my windows *riant* and beautiful, in spite of the season and weather. On the side of an amphitheatre, covered with gardens and meadows still verdant, studded with pretty boxes, and lined and fringed with colonnades of trees, which speak even now what their foliage must add to the scene, a cascade and two pieces of water just below me,—and no Bath, no road that exhibits during hours a single carriage, nothing beyond the rim of the ornamented punch-bowl, half down the side of which I have but the sky. I had marked the place when last at Bath for its privacy and beauty, its near access to the pumps without sight of the company, and its neighbourhood to Claverton Downs, my favourite promenade; but ignorant of Bath, and forgetful of

names, I could not describe intelligibly to others, and if I had they would have told me there was no lodgings here, being quite surprised when I at last, after two or three sallies, forced the place, and told them I had got lodgings on Widcombe Terrace. If this was good luck, you will say it was still better to find here exactly every thing I wanted, the best desk for writing I ever met with, and all the accommodations for an invalid. I own I was surprised to find one of my great desiderata also provided for me. I regretted on leaving town that I could not, without too much trouble and expense, carry my encyclopedia, which at a distance from large libraries I always have occasion to refer to. But, lo! I find it in the back parlour, which I had not gone into before. I must add one anecdote worth notice. On sitting down to breakfast this morning I was going to take up a volume of "Hume," in 12mo., or of "Forster's Essays," which I had brought with me, but, adverting to the day, thought I would have a little of something better, and therefore opened another book I had put in my trunk, which you know to have been a great favourite with my dear S——: "Doddridge's Life." It was one of her give-away duodecimos, probably never opened before. I opened upon, and read only one paragraph, which is at the 359th page, and is as follows:—"I would thankfully and cheerfully renew the dedication of myself to God's service, and would humbly resolve, by His gracious assistance, to spend the next year of my life in more ardent devotion, in more important and resolute studies, in more vigorous attempts for public usefulness, than I have ever yet known. I humbly refer to Him the disposal of all events, particularly to determine as to the continuance of my life. I think if I have any reason to desire it may be lengthened out, next to securing brighter evidences of my title to eternal glory by my faithful obedience, it is that I may be able to do good in the world."

I put down the book, having food enough for meditation, and I am not ashamed to say to you, that one topic of it was the apparent strangeness of finding, as

I opened the book at random, that very passage under my eye, so suitable to my situation, duties and feelings, as well as to the season. Let the shallow reasoners, who distinguish a general from a particular Providence, or the cattle who perceive no Providence at all, laugh if they will. For my part, who am not less certain by experience of that delightful truth, the intimate ever present watchfulness of Divine Power, Wisdom, and Goodness over our highly-favoured race, than I am of any truth testified by my senses, I find no difficulty, and am conscious of no presumption, in ascribing my taking up that book, and opening it just where I did, to the suggestion of a superior mind governing the imaginations of my own. Perhaps it was my dear S——, now one of the ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who (unless disinherited by their own private choice) shall be heirs of salvation. But they are allowed only to suggest, to warn, and so to adjust the spiritual aid to the exigency of the case, that we may not be tempted beyond what we are able to bear. They must put the immortal infant on its feet, and teach it to walk, not make it rickety by constant carriage. An inclining power “assisting, not restraining, reason’s choice,” is the utmost range of their province; nor have I ever felt the slightest difficulty in reconciling such superior tendence with a will morally free.

I must abstain, for the present at least, from the subject to which the last thought was leading me, a subject artificial and presumptuous, reasoning on which has made many infidels, and much distorted the amiable features of the Gospel in minds otherwise devout.

I am, my dear Wilberforce,

Ever very affectionately yours,

JAMES STEPHEN.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, January 31, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I have not seen the book which you speak of, but I have transmitted the substance of your remarks to the Reviewer (be he who he may, for I know not), observing, of course, the secrecy which you desire, and giving them all the weight I can. Many years ago, I remember upon some forgotten occasion, either talking or writing to Scott upon the subject of Claverhouse and the Covenanters to the very purport of your remarks, and I recollect observing, that though this bloody persecutor was celebrated on earth by the name of Dundee, Claverhouse was the name by which the devil knew him. James Graham had the right feeling on the subject, and never wrote more like a poet than when he touched upon it. I urged him as strongly as I could to take those times and circumstances as the groundwork either for a dramatic or narrative poem—a subject perfectly congenial to his powers, and which he could have executed admirably. But he preferred ploughing away in his “Georgics,” and wasting his efforts upon a sterile soil.

I shall look anxiously for your name in the Debates. From false doctrine, heresy, and schism, Parliament cannot deliver us; but from sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion it may.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours, with the greatest respect,
ROBERT SOUTHEY.

ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Dublin, Dawson Street, March 23, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I request your permission to present to you my particular friend—the most reverend Doctor Everard, coadjutor to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel,

and now going to London as an accredited agent and watchman from his brethren, to be in waiting, lest their interests should suffer for want of superintendence on the spot, during the looked-for discussion.

Upon the use of his going at this time I can form no opinion. He merely obeys the injunction of the R. C. Bishops; and I imagine does not distinctly know what he is to do, or with whom to confer. To relieve my poor friend, as far as in me lies, from this embarrassment, I thus endeavour to procure for him the honour and pleasure of conferring with you. I will not place him before you as a true specimen of the Irish R. C. prelate, but if they could take him as their model it would be a blessing to them and the country.

I would not take this liberty, if I did not hope that you would be interested by my friend. Possibly you never yet met a creature of this exact species—namely, a R. C. archbishop *in partibus infidelium*. You must know that his archbishopric is no less than that of the far-famed Mitylene. This idea can hardly be dissociated from the burlesque. But the man himself averts every such impression. He is upright, pious, charitable, simple of heart, full of kind feeling, as good a subject as lives, and as well affected to the Established Church as a consistent Roman Catholic can be; for he is certainly a consistent and attached Roman Catholic.

I do not, in introducing this worthy and interesting man to your acquaintance, intend or wish that you should tax yourself in time or attentions in any manner or degree implying inconvenience. I should wish him to have the comfort of one conversation with you, and let your own convenience or inclination settle every thing farther.

Were Lord Calthorpe well, and in London, I should take the same liberty with his lordship which I am taking with you; but as I have heard poor accounts of his health, and also that he intends to go abroad, I do not hazard the attempt. I most cordially wish him to grow better, and to enjoy a pleasant and (if it be the will of Heaven) not rapid course through this lower

world to that better one above, where, sooner or later, I have confidence of his arriving.

I am as zealous as ever for Roman Catholic enfranchisement. My motives spread out would fill a volume. I desire it on civil accounts; I desire it on religious accounts; I desire it as the sole means, in this country, of terminating dark conspiracy and noonday assassination. How can these mischiefs be effectually prevented, but by residents of the rank above, superintending and influencing the rank below?

Take but *degree* away: untune that string,
And hark! what discord follows!

In the ordinary distribution of society, it would seem that the higher portions were not more than sufficient to restrain and influence the lower classes. But if so, look at the state of Ireland, and say, could she fare better than she does, seeing that in her, through difference of religion and alienation of mind, the mass of the population is under no such superintendence? The Protestant part of the lower classes has it more than in proportion; while in the part where it is most needed, it neither does nor can exist—the man of station being paralysed, the man of wealth being unattracted.

Believe me,

Most cordially yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

P.S. I ought to add, that Dr. Everard is a high favourite of the Archbishop of Cashel, whose strong language to me not long since, was, "I delight in Dr. Everard!"

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, March 23, 1817.

My dear Sir,

In the year 1794, and in the twentieth year of my age, I wrote "Wat Tyler." It was immediately taken to London by poor Lovell (afterwards my brother-

in-law), and put into Ridgeway's hands. Soon afterwards (a few weeks) I went to London myself for a few days, and saw Ridgeway in Newgate; and was informed that he and Symonds would publish it. They never informed me that they afterwards changed their opinion, and I never inquired concerning it: first, because my heart as well as my mind was fully employed; secondly, because I perfectly acquiesced in the fitness of suppressing it; and, lastly, because I considered it unworthy a further thought. Had I been in town I might, perhaps, have reclaimed the MSS.; but not going there till the year 1797, I reckoned it among the follies of my youth, and was contented to forget it. My youth has no worse follies with which to reproach me. I was then a republican and a leveller, and stated such principles broadly in the dialogues—the hasty overflow of my spirits in two or three mornings. My counsel have done me more wrong than my enemies. I feel no shame respecting the work, and acknowledge no wickedness in it. I was a boy, who wrote as he felt, and as he believed, in his ignorance and inexperience; and I was as ready to dare all danger in promulgating those opinions then, as I am in contradicting them now.

Upon seeing the work announced, I lost no time in making oath to the circumstances, and applying for an injunction. The delay which has intervened has not been my fault; and my object in so doing was to acknowledge the work (that I might not seem to be ashamed of it), and stop its sale, because I know how mischievous it is at this time. Winterbottom, a Dissenting minister, has said that I gave the book to him and to D. I. Eaton, and gave them a fraternal embrace when they promised to publish it. I gave the book to no person, but was to have had a share of the profits. The persons who engaged to publish it were Ridgeway and Symonds. Winterbottom was in the room; D. I. Eaton I never saw in my life; and as for fraternal embraces, if you knew me, my dear sir, you might as soon expect to see me dancing a hornpipe on the stage now, as believe that at any part of my life I could play the fool in this

way; so utterly discordant is it to my constitutional habits and manners.

I have addressed two letters to William Smith, which, if they are not disapproved by my old friend Charles Wynn, will appear in the "Courier." The provocation will excuse their warmth, and, indeed, demanded it. To proceed further in legal courses would only draw upon me fresh expenses; of vexation I shall not speak, as regarding myself, for I have felt too many real afflictions to be hurt by any arrows which malice can direct against me. But if it be any satisfaction to Mr. William Smith, he may be told that he has made my wife ill. It is well for him and for me that I know the wickedness of duelling. How is it that the spirit of faction can have thus possessed him? Had I ever concealed my sentiments, or attempted to conceal them? Because I was a republican, or rather, as I called myself, a *pantisocrat*, at the time "Wat Tyler" was written, I had abandoned all my prospects in life for the purpose of going to the wilds of America. Those same opinions are expressed in poems, which I have never felt a wish to alter, because I never was ashamed of having in such times and such circumstances formed vain imaginations of a new system of society, or rather, as I then believed, of restoring the system of Christian society. I have merely affixed to those pieces the date of the year when they were written, and left others which accompany them to explain that as the author grew older he grew wiser also. So far I have carried the feeling that I have not even suppressed a poem upon Sunday Morning; because, erroneous as it is, the feeling is not such as could make any person of sense reproach the man who could thus feel in his youth. Nor would I have sought to suppress "Wat Tyler," had not the verses, which I wrote when the mob were ferocious in their loyalty, and the spirit of anti-jacobinism was reigning in full vigour of intolerance, become most mischievous now, when the sentiments, long since discarded by men of my stamp and class in society, have been taken up by the rabble, and are threatening the utter

overthrow of all our institutions. I heartily condemn the piece; because the principles which it contains are misapplied, and put in a mischievous form if addressed to a mob prepared for them, which they were not when written. They could then have been injurious only to myself. My feeling would be very different if the work contained any thing irreligious or licentious—there was no error from the heart: and when I pray for forgiveness of my sins, the political aberrations of my youth have never been reckoned among them.

Believe me, I feel very sensibly the kindness of your letter; and to show how I feel it, I could find in my heart to give you a brief sketch of my pilgrimage in this perilous world, and lay open not only the outward circumstances, but the inner man. It is my intention, whenever I can afford time, to do this at length for posthumous publication; but when the season of leisure may arrive, or whether it may ever be allowed me, who can tell?

If no unforeseen evil should occur to prevent my purpose, I shall arrive in London on Thursday, the 17th of next month. It will give me great pleasure to see Lord Calthorpe—and also if I should find Lady Olivia in town.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

With great respect,

Yours faithfully and thankfully,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

REV. DR. GASKIN TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.*

(Pri. Docketed Church Claims—deserves most serious consideration.)

Stoke Newington, March 25, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I received both your letters on the subject which I had ventured to mention to you. Seldom, indeed,

* Vide *Life of Wilberforce*.

have I been more gratified than by the Christian spirit and humble temper which you have exhibited in your frank avowal and statement upon it. You evidently regret the occurrence, for reasons which I consider to be very good as far as they go. We are enjoined, as you rightly observe, to "provide things honest in the sight of all men;" and we are to be cautious of giving offence where offence is likely to be taken. We are, likewise, to act, and to appear to act, consistently; and to endeavour that the good we have done, or have attempted to do, be not counteracted by our subsequent conduct. On such correct views as these, recollecting your professions of attachment to the Church of England, and conscious of your sincerity in making them, you confess that had you "preconsidered the subject fully you would have acted differently;" not, indeed, on a conviction that what you did was wrong in itself, but on the probability that it might be misconstrued, and your example cited as a justification of schism. To the spirit of this I cordially accede; and especially as I have much reason to apprehend that your example, in the matter before us, will greatly tend to strengthen a principal parishioner of mine in his practice of frequenting the church in the morning, and that same Dissenting meeting-house in the afternoon, against which I have, hitherto in vain, attempted to dissuade him, by calmly pointing out his error.

But, my dear sir, you will allow me, I know, to say, that I think what you did to have been not merely inexpedient, and attended with a probability of evil by misconstruction, but that it was wrong in itself. You admit that schism is an evil in a religious, and even in a political view; and I apprehend that you will accord with me in defining schism to be a wilful separation from a rightly constituted church requiring no sinful terms of communion. The Church of England is not only a rightly constituted, but likewise an orthodox Church, and she requires no sinful terms of communion. All separation from her, therefore, in this country, is unjustifiable schism; and to unite, even occasionally, with such schismatics in public prayer, and especially in the peculiar and most charac-

teristic act of Christian worship, must be singularly unjustifiable. There is no duty more strongly enforced in the New Testament than that of church unity. "I beseech you brethren," saith an Apostle, "by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you." We are to "walk by the same rule, and to mind the same thing;" we are to "mark them that cause divisions and offences, and to avoid them,"—not avoid by declining the courtesies and good offices of life towards them, but we are to refuse all union with them in their "divisions and offences;" and it becometh us to follow the example of those Christian believers of old, who "continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." We are not only to adhere to the doctrine, but also to the fellowship, or communion of the Apostles; and with them we are to participate in the Lord's Supper, and in social worship, because they are "the ministers and stewards of the mysteries of Christ." That this had not merely a reference to the first Apostles, but also to their legitimate successors, is clear; because the promise of our Lord was to be "with them" (and consequently their legitimate successors) "even unto the end of the world." In addition, therefore, to the fact that our Dissenting teachers and their congregations are schismatical, a pause should be made to consider whether these teachers have a valid commission to act as "ministers and stewards of the mysteries of Christ." The Church of England considers that they have not that valid commission; and I believe that they do not themselves profess to have any other commission than what their repective congregations have given them, or their own fancies have imagined; and to all this even Quakers pretend. For the first fifteen centuries of the Christian era the episcopal ministry alone was acknowledged,—*semper, ab omnibus, et ubique*; and when, at the Reformation on the Continent, a departure from it anywhere took place, necessity was pleaded; and the ministerial commission, under such circumstances, it was supposed,

might be transmitted through the hands of mere presbyters.

This was a novelty, which we, blessed be God ! are not called upon to defend. Our reformation was not so hampered. Whatever were our errors on that occasion, we restored the apostolical doctrine, and were privileged to perpetuate the apostolical ministry : with whom we have continued a fellowship, “in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” Oh, that our spiritual improvement had kept pace with our privileges ! Primitive Presbyterianism pretended, at least, to be in possession of the ministerial office by transmission ; but whether that pretence exist now, I much doubt. Sure I am that it does not exist among our independent schismatics. Under all these circumstances, I trust it will appear that to unite in public social prayer with our Dissenters, and especially to communicate with them in the characteristic act of Christian worship, is indefensible. The act commonly called the Toleration Act, but which calls itself, and should be called, the Act of Exemption, did no more than remove civil penalties : it necessarily left the spiritual sin of schism where it found it. I will only add, that I confidently trust you will receive what I have now written in the same kind and Christian temper wherewith you have written to me ; and, assuring you that I consider your letter as confidential, and that I will not unite in spreading a knowledge of the late occurrence,

I remain, my dear Sir,

With much affection and sincere Christian esteem,

Your obliged humble Servant,

GEO. GASKIN.

P. S. I know nothing of Mr. M., the present teacher at our Stoke Newington Meeting-house ; nor under what class of Dissenters he denominates himself. His predecessor, I believe, was a sort of Arian. But, even if the views of these teachers in the radical articles of the Christian faith were as Orthodox as possible, still they are unwarrantable schismatics, and they have not the apostolical commission to exercise the functions of the

Christian ministry. This parish, during the Great Rebellion, had been a hotbed of regicide and fanatical delusion. After turning out the old rector, the celebrated Puritan, Dr. Manton, got possession of the church, and occupied the identical parsonage-house in which I reside. After the Exempting Act of King William had passed, the meeting-house here was erected for the remnant of the Puritans who continued their separation and hostility to the Church; and it has continued open ever since, having some little endowment.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY DUNCOMBE, ESQ.

London, May 20; 1817.

[Mr. Henry Duncombe had been connected with many of the Latitudinarian party in Yorkshire, and through their influence, as Mr. Wilberforce feared, had been at one time in great peril of adopting Socinian tenets; but the books which had been read to him during many years of blindness, had opened to him the more cheering prospect which Christianity affords. In writing to Mr. Wilberforce, after a long interval, he had stated the alterations which had taken place in his opinions and feelings. "Old Harry," Dr. Burgh had written some time before, "has happy prospects before him. He has habituated his eye to look beyond our little landscape here. Like an exquisite painter, he has made its chief ornament the skies, and thence derived the light that gilds the whole. God bless him, and give him both here and hereafter the happiness he aspires to!"]

My dear Friend,

I really regret that I have not been able sooner to reply to your letter of yesterday,—a letter which I can truly assure you has given me more pleasure than any I ever received from you. The hand-writing of so old and so kind a friend, after so long a period had elapsed, during which we had not met either personally or by letter, must of itself be a highly gratifying cir-

cumstance to any man of common feeling. But the pleasure which your letter gives me is of a far higher order, as well as far superior in degree. It arises from the assurance you give me, that you have been improving that peaceful retirement which a gracious Providence has afforded you in the evening of life for the best of all purposes,—that of preparing for the eternity that is to follow,

“When we have shaken off this mortal coil.”

Blessed be God! He is willing to receive us at any period of life, when we come to him as penitent sinners through Christ Jesus; and He is ready also to give us His Holy Spirit, to sanctify our souls, and fit us for that heavenly state into which He means to introduce us. How strange it is that, though our understandings may be convinced that all the concerns of this short and uncertain life are as nothing compared with the never-ending condition of our future state, yet that our feelings, our hearts, will not obey this conviction; but we—the same persons who can feel as well as reason justly where the distant interests of this life are in question—cannot help being more affected by some transitory gratification, or some petty object of a worldly kind, than by the immense and durable inheritance which Christianity offers to our acceptance in the world to come. It is the Spirit of God alone, I am convinced, that enables us both to know and to feel the superior worth of divine things, and thereby prompts us to pursue them with some corresponding degree of earnestness. But, my dear old friend, I must quit this delightful theme, once more congratulating you from the heart, and reply to the business of your last letter. I am now finishing my answer on the 26th; and it is with extreme difficulty that even to-day I can obtain a quiet half-hour. It is now past three o'clock, and from before breakfast till just now I have not been alone till within the last ten minutes; for though my resigning my seat for Yorkshire has given me in some degree the

choice of my business, it has not at all lessened it. On the contrary, my having been so much longer in public life has added proportionably to the number of my assailants, and fresh ones (both personally and by letter) come forward faster than the others disappear: but, blessed be God! there is one day in every week in which I shut out the throng, and am refreshed by rising into a higher region, above all the contentious elements of our lower world.

I have been continually interrupted for the last half hour, though I thought I should be a little quiet after clearing my house of the set that was in possession; but a fresh swarm has forced itself in, and all my servants' perfectly true declarations, that I am extremely busy, will not secure me against intruders. I must hasten to a conclusion, or I shall not be able to finish my letter at all to day. You will be glad to hear that Mrs. W. and my six children are all pretty well, and we overflow with blessings; but Oh, my dear friend! a family like mine brings with it a thousand anxieties. However, there remaineth a rest for the people of God; and I humbly hope, through the undeserved mercies of our blessed Saviour, to obtain admission into that world where pain, and sickness, and sorrow are unknown. Were you at hand, I should inquire whether or not I ever sent you a copy of my own publication on "Practical Christianity." If not, I should like you to hear part of it, though I am as well aware as any man of its defects. Farewell, my dear friend, and believe me

Ever yours sincerely and affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A SON ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

London, July 21, 1817.

My very dear ——

I broke away from the last lingerers of a crowded breakfast party to come to town to one of these appointments with Ministers which our different societies have

occasion to make. This morning it was the Church Missionary Society pleading the cause of the Antipodes, or nearly so—of the native population of New Zealand; a fine race of men, both in body and natural character, who have been treated often with the most savage and wanton cruelty by the South Sea Whalers, as the ships are termed. It is really gratifying to reflect that we are thus contributing to save multitudes of unoffending beings from the grossest outrages; and still more, that we are taking measures for preserving from destruction several missionaries, and families which may be termed semi-missionaries, who would be likely to fall victims to the wars and affrays which the outrages of the ships might produce; for a prejudice being conceived against the Europeans, the innocent may suffer for or along with the guilty. I did not conceive my story would be so long. For I was about to follow it by stating that I had been detained till it was time to return to Kensington Gore. But as I find it will be too late when I get there to despatch a letter to go by this night's post, I am stopping at a friend's to scribble a few lines to you. I cannot possibly suffer this day to pass over without sending you the assurances of my most affectionate recollection; and my prayers will be offered up with augmented warmth this evening (though the special claim of this day was not forgotten this morning), that the Father of Mercies will enable us both to welcome this day with unalloyed delight and thankfulness. I really can scarcely believe you are nineteen; though, as you came into the world in 1798, Cocker will not allow you to be younger. But when you attain to my age, if it please God to prolong your life to such a period, which is much beyond what the actuaries of the annuity offices would assign you, you will be more sensible from experience than it is possible for a young man to be, how fast time seems to have galloped when we look on any event of fifteen to twenty years' previous occurrence.

When I took up my pen my mind was full of jokes about flutes and tailors, excited by your cheerful and gratifying letter (it is quite refreshing to me to hear your

lively chat, though from such a distance), which I read as I walked through the park; but even if I had leisure, whereas I am much too late, the idea of your birthday has so sobered my spirits, as to force me into a graver strain. I must, however, merely breathe the wish, which will become a prayer, to the effect of that I have already expressed. There is nevertheless one idea which I will add,—that of your being now in a situation and circumstances eminently favourable to the purpose of strengthening your moral character, to speak as a philosopher, or of growing in grace, to use the far preferable language of a Christian, prior to the trial on which you will enter on settling at college. When our Saviour himself had any remarkable service to perform,—and good men have imitated His example,—He used to spend some preceding time in retirement and devotional exercises; and indeed His not commencing his public ministry till he was thirty, was itself an exemplification of my principle. I am persuaded, as I believe I before stated to you, that hereafter it will appear that you were placed in your present circumstances with a view to the confirmation of your religious and moral principles and habits. O my dear —, let it be your care to prevent this gracious intention of Providence from being disappointed; in which case, indeed (it is an awful consideration, but so it is with all our opportunities of improvement), the enjoyment of your advantages would only swell the opposite account. But you would find it, I am persuaded, very useful, my dearest —, if you were to reflect on your situation in the very light I have now stated—reflect habitually, I mean. This would tend to stimulate your efforts, as it may justly encourage your hopes. For only think how it would probably have animated your endeavours if, on your entering the place where you at present are, you had heard a voice from heaven declaring to you, that you were placed there for the purpose of qualifying you for the enjoyment of an immense increase in the measure of your everlasting happiness. I believe it no less than if such an express assurance had been made; because it is no other than

what is warranted by the positive declarations in Scripture of the character and dealings of our God and Saviour. But I must break off most unwillingly : I am to take the chair at a Bible association this afternoon, and shall not have time to dine and dress for it. I will look out some Reviews for you, and I hope to send them off to-morrow.

Do inquire for a land surveyor : there almost always is such a man in every neighbourhood : also is there any sensible farmer from whom you could learn all about agriculture ?

Farewell ; and believe me ever most affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

I also would apologize for my writing, if it would not be enough to explain that I have been, and still am, writing on my hat ; bent to be an inclined plane *pro* desk, and I have bad implements too.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Near London, September 1, 1817.

My dear Friend,

Don't imagine that because parliament is prorogued I am almost in want of employment. Neither you nor I am likely to be in this situation ; and never was it less mine than it is now, or than it has been for many weeks past. My foreign correspondence has become considerable ; but it is all of it important, and likely, I hope, to tend to good : I cannot, therefore, wish it less. I was going to give you an account of it ; but I remember that Macaulay's late wanderings began by a visit to you, and what he would tell you must have enabled you to anticipate that Hayti and its interesting population must find me much matter both for mind and pen and time. Then I am thankful in being able to say that I have some correspondents in the United States. I cherish that intercourse, because I perceive but too

plainly, and I hear from good authority, that both in this country and in theirs there are fermenting in the minds of the greater number those bad passions, the too natural issue of which would be another war whenever some unforeseen incident should give occasion for a difference between the two governments. It is but little that an individual can do by private intercourse towards neutralizing, or, as poor Burke phrased it, dulcifying, the sharpening sourness of the public mind in either country. But yet it is one of the most important lessons which you and I have learned from our long acquaintance with human things, that when we are working in the right direction the smallest force may be productive of results of immeasurable value. The friendly spirit that I show towards the transatlantic children of our common forefathers may generate or enkindle a similar spirit in some American bosom,—that spirit light up the flame in some other; the kindly warmth may be communicated from breast to breast, and find its way to the congress and the council chamber; and all the mass of heat have arisen from a single spark struck out in what the world calls an accidental, but you and I a providential collision, between a well-disposed Englishman and a like-minded American, both of them grieving over the hostile spirit so generally diffused in each country against the other. Yours, affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. LEWIS WAY.

Stansted Park, October 8, 1817.

My dear Friend,

I think I can truly say that seldom an hour has passed while I have been awake during my residence in this house, which we shall have inhabited three weeks on Friday next, in which the owner of it has not been presenting himself to my mind. If it were not improper; and I do not see why a living friend may not rank as high or even higher than the imaginary deities of the ancients, and have even a better title to the phrase than

the deified (Un) worthies of the Pagan world,—were it not for this, I say, I would quote a beautiful passage from the speech of one of the patriots concerning the constitution, I think, in an earlier period of poor Charles's reign,—“The form of the temple remains, but the *dii tutelares* have deserted it.” Don't suppose that this sentence of Oliver St. John's was whispered in my ear by old Noll, whom, till I again inhabited the room, I forgot had been so disloyally honoured with the prime place in the royal bedroom; put there, I suppose, to remind its royal inmate of the transitory tenure of kingly power in this country. But having never been here before but when you also were present, and occupying as I do your library, I cannot get you out of my head, or indeed out of my heart, nor in truth do I wish it; and therefore, instead of striving to effect the expulsion, I shall cherish the intruder, and assign him a permanent mansion in my heart of hearts, as our great poet phrases it.

Happening to be just now extremely pressed for time, and having that sad discouragement to a long letter, the consciousness that what the *writer* may be putting on paper to the neglect of urgent and important business may not reach the hand of the *writer* an hour sooner than if it should be written a week later, or even perhaps may not reach him at all;—with these discouragements, I say, I will repress the greater part of what I should pour forth to you, if you were now to come into the room, and do little more than let you know that here we are profiting from your kindness. Indeed, I will say that a friendly act was never done in a more friendly manner, which I own I feel much more than the act itself. It is this, indeed, which makes me receive your kindness with great and undissembled pleasure; for to any one who knows as much of our common nature as you do, I need not remark that though it is easy and common to feel that measure of regard for a friend which makes us take pleasure in doing him a kind service, a much larger measure of regard, nay, even a higher and nobler quality, as well as an aug-

mented quantity, is needed for enabling us to receive a kindness from him with undefecated satisfaction. But as I must not trust myself with a second sheet, I must finish my preamble, for my letter is little else, and express the pleasure with which I have heard of your favourable reception. May it please God (it is not forgotten in our morning and evening devotions) to bless you abundantly as the instrument of good to His ancient people, and meanwhile may you be growing in your own soul in meetness for glory. So wishes, so prays, my dear friend,

Yours sincerely and affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

M. G. LEWIS, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

London, October 16, 1817.

Dear Sir,

When I had the pleasure of seeing you last year, I told you my fears of your being in the country on my return, and so it proves. I am really disappointed beyond measure, as I must sail for Jamaica before the end of this month, and should have greatly benefited by some previous conversation; and after my long absence, and having just been worried into making a fresh large Jamaica purchase, I am confined to London by law business, otherwise I should have sought you out in the country for at least a few hours. At present, I can only express my hope, that if you return to town before my departure, you will have the goodness to allow me an interview. If your stay should be protracted till November, allow me to say that if you will give me any West India hints, I shall be most grateful for them, and give them all that due consideration and respect which, (coming from such a quarter) they must deserve; and if you will send me in writing any questions which you may wish asked, or doubtful points respecting either abuses or amendments which you may wish to have investigated, you may rest assured that I will spare no

pains to get at the truth during my residence in the island.

But here is a point upon which I am most anxious to have your opinion; and as it is of considerable importance, I am persuaded that (slight as my claim is upon your acquaintance) you, as a politician and a philanthropist, will excuse the liberty of my laying the question before you.

On the 1st of next May I shall have 600 if not 700 negroes at my absolute disposal. Now, were you in my situation, what would you do with those negroes at your decease? I have no children,—those of my sisters have no claim upon me but what I choose to give them. While I live, the negroes are so happy and contented that I feel quite unwilling to alter any part of their situation for fear of making them less so; and they sent me a message to that effect themselves the other day. But how can I secure them from being ill-treated when I am dead? I do not mean by ill treatment, the cruelties of slavery, for really that is not any longer to be dreaded in Jamaica; but the hardships of it. I proposed a clause in my will, making the estate forfeited, if (under certain circumstances) the proprietor or his next heir did not visit it himself once in five years. My attorney asked me “how I could be certain that the proprietor himself would not be their greatest tyrant?” and the objection was unanswerable. Shall I leave all of them their liberty? Then they must have a provision made for them; and I could allot to them a certain portion of my land, giving them also their huts, provision grounds, and working implements; the rest of the land might devolve to my heirs; but without negroes to work it, it would be worth nothing, or but very little. As to my nephews, the mere ties of blood can have no force in a question like this: whether ten white individuals shall be able to afford two courses at table instead of one, or 600 blacks and their descendants be secured against the possibility of future ill treatment, is not a question to discuss for two moments. But if I set them free, how can I be certain that the consequences may not be dangerous to the

island and to its white inhabitants? There are so many difficulties on both sides, that you will greatly oblige me by turning the subject in your mind, and enlightening me on a point so important. I have 600 human beings absolutely at my disposal; their future welfare is the object nearest to my heart: how may I best secure it after my death? Remember that the question relates only to "after my decease;"—what I do with them during my life requires quite a separate discussion. I shall only say now, that I am convinced that it would be neither prudent nor kind to set them free at present.

You mentioned to me somebody's book on the treatment of negroes, which I did not recollect to have met with. May not this be a pamphlet, originally published simply as "By a Planter," without any name in the title-page? If so, I have the pleasure to say, that having met with it by accident, and being greatly struck with it, I carried it to Jamaica with me, and left it with my attorney, as the guide to whose directions he must adhere as implicitly as local circumstances would admit; and my estate has since been conducted entirely upon the principles of this book. I am also happy to be able to tell you that the captain of my merchantman informed me the other day that he was on my estate at Christmas; and that since my visit there the negroes had conducted themselves so well that my attorney was now reconciled to my system of management, and scrupulous in allowing them all the little indulgences and marks of kindness and notice which I had invented to induce them to work from motives of goodwill instead of terror and punishment. The captain particularly instanced the spirit of emulation with which the mothers made him notice their children, and the pride with which they showed him a sash of merit, which I had ordered to be given to every woman on her rearing a child to a certain age: the births, too, have been more numerous than usual, and I understand (for I have not yet received my negro account of last year) that in the whole year only two children died, one of whom was born diseased. And

with all this, my crops have increased instead of falling off.

As a set-off against these facts, reported by an eye-witness, and who is also returning with me to the island, I must mention, that I find a good-natured set of people circulating all over London reports that "the insurrection of 1816 was produced by my visit to Jamaica, and that my system of mistaken lenity had made my negroes so unmanageable, that since my quitting the island they have been obliged to be punished with ten-fold severity."

I will not apologize for intruding on your leisure on a subject which I know you to have so sincerely at heart, that probably all details are of interest to you. I will only add, that Hatchard of Piccadilly will convey to me any answer with which you may be good enough to favour me.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

M. G. LEWIS.

I beg you to make my best compliments to Mrs. Wilberforce, if she thinks them worth her acceptance.

SIR T. STAMFORD RAFFLES TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

On board the Lady Raffles, Spithead,
October 23, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I have delayed writing to you in acknowledgment of your last kind communication, in the hopes that I should have a few minutes to myself; but these hopes were never realized, and we are now on board our ship under weigh on our voyage to the East.

On the subject of missions, I can have no hesitation in recommending attention to the Eastern Islands. Nothing of the kind has yet found its way to Sumatra and Borneo, two of the largest Islands in the world, and containing a population of many millions. It is said

that when the people of Celebes embraced Mahometanism, the Portuguese offered the Bible at the same time. A council was appointed by the sovereign to report which of the religions was the best. Those of the council inclined to Mahometanism suggested that it was the best, because it had arrived first, and God Almighty, they said, would never have allowed error to come before truth—and the argument, however specious, prevailed. Now the Mahometans are making converts daily. Nothing is so common among the islands as crusades against the infidels—all who do not embrace Mahometanism are made slaves—considered as fair booty. May not therefore the spread of the Gospel go hand in hand with the Abolition of the slave trade in those countries?

I will write to you, my dear sir, very fully and I hope satisfactorily on all these points after my arrival, and I shall gladly avail myself of your permission to write without reserve.

The boat is putting off, and I must say farewell to you and my native land at one time. Accept my grateful thanks for all your kindness, and believe me always to remain, with veneration and affection,

Most sincerely yours,

THOS. RAFFLES.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, December 10, 1817.

My dear Sir,

I have just received a letter from Koster's sister, informing me that the consulship at Maranham is vacant.

A very erroneous notion has got abroad that I, who live at the foot of Skiddaw, who associate more with the dead than with the living, and who have set my heart and hopes upon the next world—not upon this—am very much engaged in political affairs, and possess in consequence some political influence. This draws upon me a great deal of abuse, to which I am properly in-

different ; but it induces likewise occasional applications from which I would willingly be spared.

In writing to you upon this occasion, I mean merely to say, that if this consulship at Maranham or any other similar situation in Brazil at any future time could be obtained for Henry Koster, the interests of the British merchants and the honour of the British nation would be in safe, upright, and conscientious keeping. But I am perfectly aware that the claims upon you must be numerous, and the applications with which you are troubled ten times more so. And I am also aware that your parliamentary interest, when you might choose to exert it, is probably by no means commensurate with the weight which your opinion carries to the public : this being, I believe, far greater than that of any other individual.

I have looked with some anxiety for the letter of Mr. Pitt with which you promised to favour me. It is not I think from any clinging prejudice that I am unable to regard Mr. Pitt as a great statesman. His conduct of the war appears to me to have been miserable, and his domestic policy perilously erroneous in some momentous points—more especially in the Catholic question. I do, however, full justice to his intrepidity, his talents, and his English feeling—in which last and most essential quality for a British minister Mr. Fox was lamentably wanting. But I am better qualified to deliver an opinion upon Ignatius Loyola or George Fox, than upon either of these great leaders.

Perhaps you may have heard that I am writing (in truant hours, and yet with great diligence) a life of Wesley. It will be upon such a scale as to comprise a view of our religious history during the last fourscore years. I think it will not be read without interest, and I hope not without utility, sooner or later. I remember Wesley well : he laid his hands upon me when I was about six years old and blest me. It was a chance meeting : I was going up the stairs of a lodging house at Bath, when he came out of one of the rooms, and

was struck with my appearance. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me,

Faithfully and most respectfully yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Keswick, January 3, 1818.

My dear Sir,

I return Lord Castlereagh's letter. Whatever may be the result of the application, both Koster and myself are equally indebted to you for this kindness.

That Mr. Pitt was a disinterested man I never doubted, nor that he was a man of great and extraordinary talents; I doubt the extent of his foresight, and the wisdom of many of his measures—perhaps there would be little difference in our opinions now that we must look back upon his administration as a part of past history. There is no likelihood of my moving southward during the present year. But I should be most glad to receive from you any information or hints respecting Wesley. I consider him as the most influential mind of the last century—the man who will have produced the greatest effects, centuries, or perhaps millenniums hence, if the present race of men should continue so long. The early excesses of Methodism I can account and allow for; I admire his tolerant and truly Catholic spirit; and I accord so far with his opinions, as they are expressed in his latter years, that where he goes beyond me in his belief, I feel a conviction it is because I have not yet advanced far enough. For instance, I am as deeply and fully persuaded as he was, that the spirits of the departed are sometimes permitted to manifest themselves. There is a body of evidence upon this subject, which it is impossible for me to disbelieve; besides, it is good that it should be so, and this with me (in such matters) is sufficient reason for concluding that it is probable—but it is also probable upon the strictest reasoning. But I do not believe in witchcraft, and very

much doubt the reality of demoniacal possession. Even, however, if both were admitted, the absurd stories which he credits impeach his judgment, and consequently weaken the force of his authority when he is right. I shall very soon begin upon an essential and interesting part of the work—a view of the state of religion in this country from the Reformation to his time. Even now, after all the Methodists have done, and all they have caused the Church to do, there is no part of Christendom where the state of religion of the populace is so utterly neglected. The field is left fallow, and then we wonder to find that a more active spirit has been sowing tares! I am not surprised at the results of these late trials: they are a fit and proper sample of the consequences of Mr. Fox's law of libel. Whether there be courage enough to put that law upon its proper footing, *valde dubito!*

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours respectfully and truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Elmdon House, Tuesday night,
July 28, 1818.

My dear Stephen,

Did I ever mention to you a certain Mr. —, the son of a clergyman in Scotland, who came some few years back into this country, and was to be ordained after completing his education? There is a suspicion, whence arising I forget, if I ever heard, but I must say confirmed by a certain eccentricity both in his language and his written sentiments, and this I believe operated against him with some of the bishops who had been asked to ordain him. Ever since, this poor man has been keeping his head with difficulty above water. He is a complete bookworm, so completely such, that he spends his whole time in reading and writing, and seems to care little what it is he reads. Hence he has not a

single friend or even acquaintance, those whom he first formed (the Seceding ministers, to whom he had been recommended) telling me when I applied to them to assist in raising a collection for him, "Sir, he has left us." Now, I might as well have left you to make out most of this yourself, and have begged you to see him and to judge whether it would not be worth while to let him have 20*l*. (if nothing can be done through other people), and be sent to Scotland. He is just of the stuff of which ushers in academies are made; but then he has so much of the Scotch cadence, that I really think few schoolmasters in this country would take him. Yet, poor creature, the man must not starve; and again and again, when I have begun by telling him that he ought to support himself by the labour of his hands, that charity ought to be allotted to the decrepitude of age, or sickness, or the weakness of infancy, it has ended in my giving him money. He declares, and I believe truly, that he has gone about to all the places he could think of, asking for writing employment. Now in Scotland he would be in a place where his dialect and appearance would be less against him, and in the neighbourhood of his birth-place he would not be suffered to starve. I ought to have said that a respectable Scotch gentleman wrote to me two or three years ago, speaking of him as a worthy, well-meaning man. I will enclose you his last letter, and do you see him and judge what it may be best to do for him—my conscience is uneasy about him. I will acquiesce in any measure you approve. There is something the farthest in the world from the common cant of a beggar in his manner and language. He talks with you on the footing of an equal, which I own I rather like, though there is a sort of coarseness in him.—The most absurd thing I ever knew, was M.'s advising him to learn French: you must give the man a new set of organs, or he never can pronounce it—I must break off.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Monday evening.

My dear Wilberforce,

I return you Mr. R.'s letter: give by all means, give freely. I am only surprised you should have any doubts about it.

What! an erudite candidate for the first chair in Edinburgh, an Addison, in distress for a few paltry pounds, the only requisite for his rising to eminence as well as affluence, and you refuse him a supply! But so it is with you narrow-minded people. There is Mrs. W. now, with her ten brats, and her widow's weeds, and her religious enthusiasm, will move you more than all the efforts of a stout fellow, who, in spite of your former largesses, may have to lay down the pen, to the irreparable loss of science, (*proh pudor!*) and take up the flail or the mattock. What would posterity say to this if it had a tongue? But what care you for posterity? You say, I suppose, like the Irishman, posterity has done nothing for me; and why should I do any thing for it?

I however, will wash my hands of any participation in these mean-spirited maxims. I wrote to Mrs. W. to-day of your pecuniary offer. I will write to-morrow to retract it for you; for certainly all you can spare for Scotland ought to be reserved for this great and modern philosopher, Mr. R.

Yours very affectionately,
J. S.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO H. R. H. THE DUKE OF
CAMBRIDGE.

Elmdon House, near Birmingham, July 29, 1818.

Sir,

I should begin my letter by apologizing to your Royal Highness for the freedom of this address, were it not for this consideration, that unless the motives by

which I am prompted shall plead my excuse, it would be in vain for me to offer any other.

Happening, a few weeks ago, to have a *tête-à-tête* with a very intelligent gentleman, who had been for some time resident in the University of Gottingen, our conversation naturally turned upon the present state of that celebrated seat of learning : more especially I inquired concerning the prevailing opinions on the most important of all subjects, religion ; and I learned with extreme concern, that a system of unqualified scepticism was maintained and diffused by one at least, if not by more, of the ablest and most accredited professors of the University ; and that thereby, as formerly in Edinburgh, scepticism was become but too naturally the fashionable system among the young students. Unhappily, this conversation took place during the busiest part of the last session of parliament ; and before I had another opportunity of conferring with the gentleman from whom I received the intelligence, he had left the kingdom. Had I been at all aware that I should see him no more I should have availed myself of the opportunity for obtaining more precise and complete information. But general and incomplete as my intelligence is, I conceived, after much serious reflection, that I should not be acquitted of the duty I owe both to God and man, if I were not to use my best endeavours for arresting the progress of an evil, the fatal effects of which, if ever doubtful, cannot I think be questioned by any well informed man, who has traced the causes, and witnessed the effects of the French revolution.

It cannot be requisite for me to assure your Royal Highness that no man is less inclined than myself to interfere with the rights of private judgment ; but when what professes itself to be a Christian seminary of education not only ceases to teach the wholesome truths of Christianity, but actually inculcates the lessons of scepticism, and when, therefore, the youth who have been sent by their parents to imbibe the principles of Christian truth, return to them after having drank deep of the noxious and bitter waters of infidelity, surely it becomes the duty of those whom Providence has invested with the

requisite power, and thereby charged with a corresponding responsibility, to check an evil, the extent of which exceeds all human powers of calculation. At least, in common honesty, let mankind be no longer beguiled by false professions. Let the rising generation be no longer corrupted by infidel opinions, in the very seminary in which it might have been expected that they would be instructed in the doctrines and precepts of the Christian faith.

I need say no more. I cannot doubt from your Royal Highness's known character, and from the peculiar interest which you must naturally take, not merely in the credit, but in the real effects on mankind of that celebrated University, of which, from your residence in Hanover, your Royal Highness appears designed by Providence to be the superintendent and the guardian, that your Royal Highness will consider this subject with the seriousness which it so justly claims: and that though perhaps quietly, (which the nature of the case may probably render most expedient,) yet seriously, you will set yourself to ascertain the real amount of the evil, and to adopt some effectual remedy; a remedy, the effects of which shall not stop at merely preventing the diffusion of falsehood, but which shall provide for the inculcation of truth. Your Royal Highness's benevolence no less than your religion will here operate; for to your Royal Highness I am persuaded I need not remark, that if even the future interests of man were out of the question, every humane mind would be zealous for the establishment of Christianity, as at once the most compendious and most effectual method that ever was devised, for promoting the temporal improvement, and securing the social and domestic happiness of our fellow-creatures.

I will only express my humble hopes, that your Royal Highness will receive with indulgence a representation, which in truth I should scarcely have made, but for the personal esteem and attachment with which I have the honour to be, with great respect,

Sir, your Royal Highness's

Most obedient and faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bellevue, Bray, August 31, 1818.

My dear Sir,

Though I have almost forfeited my right of troubling you with a letter, I trust you will not be unwilling to hear from me. Again and again I have thought of writing; particularly, after receiving a kind mark of your remembrance in the cover of a letter from Mr. Jebb, when he was last in England. I assure you, I felt all the goodness to me which those few words expressed; and indifferent health, together with some special occupations alone, prevented my giving immediate vent to the grateful feelings which your kindness excited.

I am now induced to write to you by certain thoughts, which the reading of a very strange pamphlet has occasioned. It may or may not have fallen into your hands. If it has not, its singularity may be a reason why you should look into it. It is written by a London clergyman, "Vicar of St. Bartholomew the Less," and contains an express and earnest proposal that the Church of England should re-unite with the Church of Rome. He thinks if such an overture were made, it would be possible, by means of a council, to settle terms of ecclesiastical coalition; and he conceives this measure to be the only remedy for the religious dissonance now prevailing in England. He says, that through "the forgetfulness of all that constitutes a visible Church of Christ in constitution and discipline," there is in England, "the unhappy anomaly of an episcopal establishment and a sectarian population," and he thinks the growing weakness of the English Church can find adequate support only in an alliance with that great body, whose discipline, he imagines, is still entire, and therefore capable of sustaining unity of belief and practice.

A proposition of this nature, considered in itself, would not be worth a moment's attention. Like countless other foolish speculations, it would be sure speedily to vanish into thin air. But, as many well-intentioned

persons feel similar apprehensions respecting the Church of England; and, not less than this writer, lament the growth of sectarianism, there is a possibility that they who express these feelings, and who complain that the active friends of religion are not sufficiently alive to the increasing danger, may be suspected to have at bottom, some such leaning as he professes. Thus, deeper jealousy than even yet actuates would be excited, and co-operation against common enemies set at greater distance than ever.

But to come nearer to my special point: when I recollect what I have said to you, or what you may have happened to know of my sentiments, respecting the Roman Catholic question, and when I consider how possible it is, that through mere want of caution I may have so pleaded their political cause, as to expose myself to the suspicion of being over-indulgent to their religion, especially, as I have never appeared among the friends of Bible or Missionary Societies; on these accounts, I have not wholly been without fear, that if you happened to think of me, while looking over this pamphlet, it might by possibility appear to you not unlikely that my opinions were in some sort of agreement with its sentiments, and that, were I also to speak my whole mind, I too might be found at least not adverse to his extraordinary speculation.

Will you forgive me for supposing the possibility of my occupying such a place in your mind, as the occurrence of what I am imagining would imply? If I am safe from such a suspicion, in consequence of me and my ways of thinking being comparatively forgotten by you, I cannot but desire to re-excite your recollection, by bringing myself before you. If I still live in your memory, and you think better of me than to class me with such persons, you will, notwithstanding, receive with your accustomed kindness the few thoughts which I am led to communicate on this, certainly, not wholly uninteresting subject.

I certainly, perhaps not less than this writer himself, apprehend the Church of England to be in imminent

danger; and while I am satisfied that the anti-evangelical party, by way of defending the Church, are doing every thing possible to increase its hazards and almost to insure its downfall, I am obliged to think, that the measures pursued by those who are called evangelical, however upright in intention, and even fitted to multiply instances of individual piety, are not exactly such as are calculated to avert the impending evil. I make this remark, not for the purpose of obtruding my private opinion, but in order to express with greater satisfaction to myself, what is, if possible, still more deeply my conviction, that the Church of England might as well be annihilated at once as re-united to the Church of Rome, and that of all possible projects which could be devised by the wayward will of man, that of such a re-union is the wildest and most pernicious.

You never would have agreed with me as far as you have done, respecting the Roman Catholic question, if you had not felt that to befriend Roman Catholic enfranchisement was not by any just consequence to countenance their religion. I dare say you have not been less persuaded than myself, that politically to excommunicate the Roman Catholics is to condense and brace them as a separate religious body, and what has long impressed me, will, therefore, to you also probably appear not unreasonable; that if Providence means, for mysterious reasons, still to keep up the Roman Catholic interest in Ireland, the present disqualifying statutes will remain yet longer in force; whereas, if its dissolution or reformation be a near purpose of overruling wisdom, the Roman Catholics will, doubtless, be brought within those liberalizing influences which full enfranchisement would imply, and which, in the nature of things, they could no more resist, for any length of time, than the ice of winter can resist the increasing warmth of spring. In fact, it has seemed to me, that their religion in this country was so much more kept together, by our compression than by its own cohesion; that if only we had courage to make the experiment, we should shortly find that it had owed its chief strength to

our fears, not to its own firmness. I particularly think that those who should obtain seats in either House must become more and more like others of the same rank; and though the first possessors of these distinctions might professedly retain their original habits, they could not, however they might wish it, entail their prejudices on their children. New habits both of mind and manners would be formed by new circumstances; and to a moral certainty, if not the son, the grandson of every Roman Catholic member of either House would be a Protestant. Let me add one more conjecture: when several such cases should occur, it would be impossible that the Roman Catholic clergy should not become alarmed; and to retain their flock, they would, in all probability, think of the sole expedient within their power, the recommending of their system by some little infusion of rationality, as, for instance, exchanging the Latin for English service, and giving the sacrament of the Eucharist in both kinds. But were alteration thus far admitted, it would go on; concession would increase instead of satisfying demands, and an actual reformation of the Irish Roman Catholic Church, leading at length to a coalition with our reformed Episcopal Church, would be the issue.

Whether or no, therefore, your speculations look as far forward as mine, I should be pretty sure that my political views alone would not expose me in your judgment to the being classed with the writer of this pamphlet. But should you have happened to read the appendix to Mr. Jebb's sermons (which in a prefixed advertisement is stated, both as to "authorities and arguments," to have been the work jointly of himself and of a friend), and to recollect the use made of Vincentius Lirinensis, a writer of the fifth century, it might strike you, on looking into this gentleman's pamphlet, as rather extraordinary, not only that he places this same writer in the very front of his authorities, but actually appears to ground himself on the identical passage which is especially referred to in the appendix. I confess I should not wonder that this circumstance, if

adverted to and not examined beyond the first impression, should excite a suspicion that the appendix and the pamphlet breathed the same spirit, and were directed, with whatever difference of manner, to the same object.

But if chance should have led you, my dear sir, to notice this apparent coincidence of quotation, I would wish you to be apprised of the fact, that in the judgment of Mr. Jebb and myself there is not any firmer ground on which to attack the very citadel of the Roman Catholic system, than that which is afforded by this same passage of Vincentius as adduced by us, but of which the author of the pamphlet, whether through design or inadvertence, has only transcribed as much as appeared to him suited to his special purpose.

It is, indeed, the object of Vincentius to persuade his readers that the depth and extent of Holy Scripture are such, as to place it, in many instances, beyond the reach of private interpretation; and that, in order safely to explain what appears dark or disputable in the Divine Word, we must consult the concurrent judgment of the Catholic church; or, as he himself expresses it, "*quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est.*" This maxim of Vincentius, in its first general statement, the writer of the pamphlet has thought fit to adduce as if it supported his project. But Vincentius goes on to decide (and Mr. Jebb and I have dwelt at least as much on this latter part as on the first general principle), that if the body of the existing church should at any time appear to deviate from its original purity of doctrine, then and in that case it would be not the right only, but, as far as capacity went, the duty of each individual Christian, not to follow a multitude to do evil, but in defiance of prevalent example to regulate his own belief by the guidance of uncorrupted antiquity.

I believe you will see at once that this sequel of Vincentius's doctrine (which he has thought proper to omit) is as much as possible the very antipode of popery—or rather, a solvent principle before which the entire system would instantly come to nothing. The papal palladium is implicit subjugation of the individual to the existing

rulers of the church. The private Christian, according to the popish belief, has no right to inquire for himself. He is deemed a virtual heretic if he makes any such attempt. He must receive whatever his clerical guides propound without appeal or hesitation. Consequently the Roman Catholic who should follow the advice of Vincentius in searching for ancient truth and adhering to it, against the dictates of modern church-despotism, would forthwith incur the anathema of his superiors, and be considered as a deserter from the ranks of the faithful.

This remark is too obvious to need confirmation; but it would be confirmed were it needful by the well known fact that Bp. Ridley, in the dispute at Oxford, supports his conduct as a reformer by this identical passage:—"I use," said he, "the wise council of Vincentius Lirinensis, whom I am sure you will allow: who, giving precepts how the Catholic church may be in all schisms and heresies known, writeth in this manner: 'When,' saith he, 'one part is corrupted with heresies, then prefer the whole world before that part; but if the greatest part be infected, then prefer antiquity.'"

Had this writer, therefore, examined more closely the author on whom he places reliance—had he even read to the end the passage which he quotes, if his mind be capable of conviction, he would have been disabused; at least, if he be a man of conscience, he would not have adduced Vincentius Lirinensis as favouring a measure against which he has pronounced the plainest and most decisive protest that could have been expressed in human language.

In fact, the case is too clear to leave room for argument. A Roman Catholic is, *ipso facto*, incapable of performing what Vincentius regards as the essential duty of every intelligent Christian. Whoever, therefore, becomes a Roman Catholic, once for all precludes himself from what Vincentius enjoins as the only resource against widely infectious error; or if, being within the pale of that church, he notwithstanding resolves to act as Vincentius has directed, he violates the vital principle of

his religion, and is consequently a Roman Catholic no longer.

I believe I have said enough to show that in this apparent sameness of quotation there is the utmost difference both of manner and intention; and that whether Vincentius's leading principle be in itself true or false, neither he nor the authors of the appendix can be justly involved in the censures to which the writer of the pamphlet has made himself liable. Truth, however, obliges me to remark that all the matter contained in the pamphlet is not, in my judgment, alike exceptionable. In several instances the quotations strike me as interesting and important. I speak, however, exclusively of those which relate to the doctrine of the Eucharist, and to the leading tenet of Vincentius--the use of unbroken Catholic tradition in interpreting the obscurities of the written word. On these two subjects there are passages quoted from the Church of England authors, which I conceive applicable to infinitely safer and wiser purposes than that which they are so strangely and inconsequently brought to support.

It is, I confess, my settled persuasion, that the piety of the English Church has been deeply chilled by the prevalence of those low notions respecting the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which were first made popular by the well known work of Bishop Hoadley. I sincerely wish, therefore, this important subject were more closely and dispassionately investigated than it has yet been. The issue, I conceive, would be a view of that sacred ordinance, alike removed from the frigidness of Zuinglianism and the monstrous absurdity of a literal transubstantiation. It seems to have been the pious purpose of those who revised the Communion Service in 1662 to lead the mind to this idea: I mean to inspire, substantially, the sentiment which Bishop Ridley expressed in his reply to Dr. Seton's question, "Where is then the miracle, if Christ be present through grace and efficacy only?" "Yes," answered Ridley: "there is a miracle, good sir. Christ is not idle in His sacraments. Is not the miracle great, trow you, when bread, which

is wont to sustain the body, becometh food to the soul? He that understandeth not that miracle, he understandeth not the force of that mystery." This intention of the revisers, though, doubtless, not without effect on the feelings of communicants, will be distinctly understood only by comparing the altered form with the service as it stood before 1662; and particularly by observing the several rubrics which were then inserted. On such a comparison, I conceive, it will be obvious, that the idea meant to be conveyed exactly agrees with what Bishop Horseley has expressed in one of his charges—that the Eucharist is not merely "a rite of simple commemoration," but that "the matter of the Sacrament is by Christ's appointment, and the operation of the Holy Ghost, the vehicle of Grace to the believer's soul." For my part I receive this view, because I cannot otherwise interpret St. Paul's deep expressions in the xth and xith of 1 Corinthians; and I cannot help thinking that low ideas on this point are a cause why books written on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper are seldom, if ever, either satisfactory to the understanding or impressive on the heart.

I am aware that what my friend Jebb and I have said respecting the use of Catholic tradition in interpreting Scripture has been received with great jealousy. But surely, on this head, there can be no danger in admitting what has been admitted by Chillingworth and Tillotson. The judgment of these two celebrated divines, on Catholic tradition, will be found in the 77th page of the pamphlet. As far as I understand, Tillotson's words, as there given, convey the precise opinion of Mr. Jebb and myself; and we do not go the length of Chillingworth. Universal tradition, according to Chillingworth, when clearly authenticated, is to be followed in every thing "fundamental, or not fundamental;" whereas, in our judgment, it is to have force respecting fundamentals only; subordinate matters, as we conceive, being not only alterable, but from change of times and circumstances, often requiring alteration. It is remarkable that Vincentius makes this very distinction: "The ancient consent of the holy fathers,"

says he, "is to be investigated and followed by us with earnest application of mind; not, however, in all the minuter questions of the divine law, but only or at least chiefly respecting the rule of faith." Here again, I cannot but observe, Vincentius calls individual Christians to a discriminative exercise of mind, and by inevitable consequence ascribes to them a right of inquiry as opposite to Roman Catholic principles as light is to darkness.

In troubling you with these remarks, I am far from hoping to recommend the view of my friend and myself to your acceptance. I merely wish, by pointing out the contrariety between the system of the pamphlet and ours, to avert the possibility of our being involved in any cloud of suspicion which may be excited by its frantic suggestion. At the same time it is but candid to own, that the more we consider the subject, the more solid, to our mind, appears the ground on which we have taken our stand. Against Roman Catholics in particular we conceive it to be impregnable. It was the ground on which Ridley combated his opponents, and which all their subtilty could not induce him to relinquish. We can here turn against our enemies those very weapons of which they make their proudest boast. We can here demonstrate, upon our side, the reality of that certainty and continuity, by the semblance of which they have been so long entrapping the unlearned and the unstable.

We cannot but persuade ourselves that the growing dissonancies in religion, (which, in point of fact, are undeniable,) and the increasing cries of "Lo, Christ is here," and "Lo, Christ is there," will at length dispose the truly upright of heart to pant after some more settled order of things than recent times have exemplified. The jar of words and the conflicts of parties will evince the necessity of some certain rallying point where an effectual stand may be made against the presumption of novices, and the wiles of the deceitful. If such a post of safety be not discoverable, how are the contests of the religious world to terminate? My friend and I think that it is to be found in the written word of God, not as interpreted for himself by each ignorant or self-conceited

individual, but as illustrated by the converging rays of those who have been successively lights in their generations. "The opinions," says Vincentius, "are to be collected of those fathers alone, who with holiness, wisdom, and constancy, living, teaching, and persevering in the Catholic faith and communion, have enjoyed the privilege of dying in Christ faithfully, or of dying for Christ happily."

It seems to us that to trace out this concurrence is, in reality, to recur to God's work, for elucidation of His word. Such persons as Vincentius describes were what they were through the operation of the Divine Spirit; the virtues in which they excelled were the fruit of that Spirit: and the concordant principles by which that fruit was nourished and matured could be no other than rills and rivulets of that river which proceedeth from the throne of God and of the Lamb. What then is the unbroken agreement of results and principles, in this most interesting retrospect, but, in a sober sense, the witness of the Divine Spirit to His own truth? If, therefore, it has in any instance pleased that blessed Spirit to speak obscurely, can we do more wisely than to examine how the same adorable agent has wrought, in order that the principles of heavenly chemistry delivered in the written word may be explained, by the practice of the allwise Artist in the laboratory of his Church? Thus, we conceive unity of sentiment, on the very matters which now divide Christians, to be rationally and luminously attainable—and it is our persuasion that it will be attained—for our Saviour's prayer cannot always remain unanswered: sooner or later Christians will be one, that the world may believe; and perfected in one, that the world may know.

Then I think it will be, that the apocalyptic call will be especially addressed to those now held captive in the mystical Babylon—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her plagues." And when, through that call, every living particle, in which the spiritual breath of God is, has been extracted from the now mixed concrete of the Roman Catholic Church, it

is my belief that the incorrigible residuum will be the victim of those maledictions prefigured by the seven vials, none of which, I conceive, according to the tenour of the apocalyptic prophecy, shall be poured out, until the season of vengeance has fully come. Adieu, my dear sir. I determined not to exceed two sheets. I am now, therefore, forced to set you free, and I entreat you to believe me,

Always faithfully, affectionately, and gratefully

Yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO H. BANKES, ESQ.

Rydal, near Ambleside, September 8, 1818.

My dear Bankes,

It is true here I am! but owing to unavoidable detentions, we are only very recently arrived: and though the climate of this country is, in the valleys, milder, I am persuaded, than in most parts of England, yet the delight I feel in viewing my old haunts is not unmixed with regret for the bright and warm sunshine which I am assured was enjoyed in this lake country not less than in most other parts, though it is difficult to believe it, for never was the verdure more exquisite than it is at this moment. But in the very short time we already have been here, we have had several wet days; yet it is so dry immediately after rain, and the waterfalls become so much finer, that perhaps we gain more than we lose by the showers. I have begun to have *Madame de Staël* read to me, and with all the disadvantages of a translation, and I suspect a very indifferent one, and of not reading it with my own eyes, I must say I am extremely struck with it; I had no idea that she possessed so much sound political judgment, combined with a considerable shrewdness in discernment of the characteristic traits of human nature in different classes and individuals. How clever are her remarks on the courtier minister, and how skillfully she slides over the

weaker parts of her father's character. How much better and more true are her principles than those of our modern factious reformers.

And now I must notice your domestic ecclesiastical occurrence*—I am sure I should be void of all feeling, if I could be uninterested in what so nearly concerns you, who have never failed to take an interest wherever my feelings were in question, and who, through all the changes of public life, have always treated me with the cordiality of true friendship. But you have touched a string, which often, I assure you, vibrates inwardly in my heart, though I believe too seldom I let the sound escape to outward observation. To speak without a figure, both in relation to you and yours, more especially to my godson, I have not seldom had many a serious rumination, and I have quarrelled with myself for not opening my mind to you enough, on the most interesting of all subjects. I have not eyesight to allow me to put on paper what I might otherwise wish to say on this head. But a few words I will state, and I will give you a microscopic view of a work which I have long been intending to write. I am not sure that I did not once name it to you, for it is a design, though unexecuted and even uncommenced, of many years standing. The main purpose would be to enforce the duty of a diligent and attentive perusal of the writings of St. Paul. Though all the New Testament, claiming the same title to be received as of divine authority, should doubtless be studied seriously, yet every fair reasoner must admit, and on the very ground of deference to divine authority, that the writings of St. Paul have a peculiarly strong claim to our most serious perusal—because he was expressly commissioned to be the apostle and instructor of us Gentiles, and this when he himself wished rather to go to teach his countrymen the Jews. Our Saviour Himself, in His last discourse with his disciples, stated, that there were truths which had been hitherto withheld from them, but in which they would

* Mr. Bankes's youngest son had just received holy orders.

be instructed, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth as he is called, when they should be guided into all truth. One great distinction was specified by our Saviour Himself, when He states that in future all their prayers should be offered up through His mediation, which He remarked had never been the case before. And it is intimated that the instruction should be in those particulars which respected our Saviour himself—I am not here alluding to mysterious, still less to speculative matters, but to what is practical and plain as connected with practice, though high and inscrutable in its nature and relations.

I am persuaded, that from the neglect of St. Paul's writings has proceeded, in a great degree, an erroneous view of the spirit and genius of Christianity, which has the most important practical effects; especially in what concerns the formation of those dispositions of heart which are to qualify us for that future state of existence into which we are to pass hereafter. Of one thing I am sure, that any solicitude I feel for you is not of an uncharitable kind, as such anxiety is sometimes charged with being; but it is of a friendly character and nature, proceeding from the interest I take in your well-being. It was one of our great men, I forget which, our great litterati I mean of two centuries ago, who said, if he had another year to live, he would employ it in two things—one of them being the perusal of St. Paul's Epistles, the other I have forgotten. I wish you would engage in the same occupation. But then it must be a serious and a scholar-like perusal, accompanied, I should say, with fairness, on the authority of the Scripture itself, with prayers for the divine illumination, not to reveal new truths, but to impress those which the word of God contains, more especially also endeavouring to let Scripture be its own interpreter, by comparing one part with another, and observing that it will often happen, that where there are some unconquerable difficulties, there may be other proofs sufficiently clear for practice.

Farewell my dear Banks. How little did I suppose I should be drawn into so long a letter. But I too

seldom write to you, as I too seldom see you, not from want of disposition, but of ability.

With kind remembrance and every good wish,
I am ever your affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO H. BANKES, ESQ.

Rydal, near Kendal, September 23, 1818.

My dear Bankes,

By all means read Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*. Of all his ingenious, and interesting, and able works, it is certainly the most ingenious, and though the idea of its principle be not quite original (for it was brought forward by Dr. Doddridge in his *Exposition* in a degree quite sufficient to suggest to Paley's acute intellect the use that might be made of it), yet it is so extended and applied by Paley, as to entitle him to as great a degree of praise, even for invention, as most of our great inventors can fairly claim. For whether in Jenner's case, or any others, you always find on inquiry, that there was some one or other, who had done the same thing, or something very like it. Paley's work delivers several of St. Paul's Epistles and the book called the Acts of the Apostles into your hands as the works of a divinely commissioned teacher; for, as I remember, Butler argues, if you admit the authenticity of several of the Epistles, that for instance of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the supernatural powers of the Apostle Paul, and of the Christians to whom he wrote, follows of course. As to the question—What commentator? I am clear myself that Doddridge is the best. There is in him the least of that disposition, so common in commentators, but so censurable, to strain passages unfairly for the support of their own system. As for the order of reading the Epistles of St. Paul, I see no better than that in which they stand, unless perhaps that it might be well to read the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is supposed to be his, if not the first, yet pretty early. But I must add, (though

honestly to confess it to you as an old friend, I had rather have kept it to myself,) in what way soever you begin the Epistles, prayer for the divine blessing on the perusal should precede the reading of them.

I will make one more remark. That it is much to be regretted, as I remember telling our poor old friend —, when we were *tête-à-tête* in a chaise in one of the beautiful valleys I was showing him when he visited me at the house I had near Windermere, that people will be always bringing forward and disputing about the high and mysterious doctrines of religion, and hence persons see Christianity or rather the Christian Scriptures through their medium. This was just his case; and I well remember when he said to me, “How can I believe that the Maker of all creation became a little infant?” I replied to him, “No more could I if I did as you do, that is, view the arguments for Christianity as embodied in the arguments for that proposition. But act rationally, examine and weigh the arguments and evidences on which the truths of Christianity and of the Holy Scriptures rest, and then estimate, after satisfying yourself that the infancy of Christ the Son of God is in the Holy Scriptures, whether all the above arguments and evidence are to be set aside and overbalanced, by the improbability of this single position.” My dear Banks, I ought not perhaps to have written so hastily on this important subject; but feeling for you the regard I do, and grateful as I am for our long and uniform friendship, I cannot but feel very desirous that you should in earnest give your understanding and your heart (for both must be surrendered) to the serious investigation of these important truths, and follow and obey practically the course they would prescribe to you. May the divine blessing accompany your studies, and still more, the more difficult practical task that remains behind in the bringing, as the Apostle expresses it, into the obedience of Christ the heart and the tempers, the dispositions, the thoughts, words, and actions.

My eyes have been for some time complaining in their way, and I must release them. This country never was

more beautiful: there has not been any want of rain, though the summer was here, as Southey says, "a good old-fashioned English summer, such as we had when I used to pick grapes out of my grandmother's bedroom window." Farewell, with kind remembrances,

Ever yours sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Kensington Gore, Wednesday evening,
November, 1818.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have to ask your pardon for not forwarding this cover to-day. I meant to have written to you respecting that sad, sad event* in Russell Square; but the morning papers have detailed all I could have told. I have not recovered my spirits from the shock. What a disheartening blow to our poor cause! There could not have been a greater loss, except in yourself. My feelings have been the more painful, because, perhaps, had I not postponed a purpose that I formed on hearing of Lady Romilly's death, I might have saved him. I had not heard of, but could well estimate his sufferings. I meant therefore to write to him, giving him an account of my own severer trials (that of 1796 he would have allowed to be so), and using all the topics I could to comfort him, if not on the true principles, on such as were not wrong, and he was likely to feel; especially animating him with the prospect of doing much for the poor negroes, and urging him to take care of himself for their sakes. Who knows what this, and the warm expression of sympathy from an unexpected quarter, might have effected? It might have turned the scale for life; but I waited for time to do the thing well, not knowing that he had returned to town till I heard of the sad catastrophe. Alas, alas! what a world is this! or rather what would it be without the hope of heaven!

* The death of Sir Samuel Romilly.

Poor Romilly, the description of his state strikes me with forcible and strange recollections. In 1796 I really believe my case was almost identically the same. I have often said, and am strongly impressed with the belief, that I did not sleep for a week; and strange things passed through my mind which I recollect at times with a doubt whether it was in a state of sanity. Yet friends for the most part might think me composed. You, my dear W., who were very and most seasonably kind, probably saw nothing to the contrary. But the heart knoweth its own sorrows. Happily I had always too much fear of God to think of suicide for a moment. Affectionate respects to all at Yoxall Lodge.

J. S.

EDWARD JERNINGHAM, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Lincoln's Inn, November 25, 1818.

My dear Sir,

I think it proper, that I should make known to you the result of a meeting, which took place yesterday, of the Committee of the Board of British Catholics.

The lamented death of our much respected Advocate Mr. Elliott, has turned the eyes and hearts of our whole body towards you, and I can sincerely say, that it is a sentiment which has united us all.

It is intended, that a deputation should wait upon you, as soon as you return to town, and the reason of my making you this previous, unofficial, and private communication is, that I may add my individual request and hope, that you will not deem the petition of a body like that of the British Catholics unworthy of your high and far-famed reputation, as the generous and common advocate of the oppressed throughout the Christian world.

With respect to the form of the petition intended to be presented this next session of Parliament by the Catholics of Great Britain, I have taken the liberty of forwarding you a printed copy of the one presented in

the session of 1816, and which the Committee of our Board are desirous of re-adopting.

I have the honour to be, my dear Sir,

With the highest sentiments of respect
and consideration,

Your obedient servant,

EDWARD JERNINGHAM.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Temple of Peace, Wendover Dean Hill,
September 7, 1819.

My dear Wilberforce,

I am at length fairly settled here in that compendious magnificence of style which has been celebrated by some eminent poet (I forget his name) in heroic French measure,—

“A cobbler there was, and he lived in a stall,” &c.;

but I have improved on the architectural skill of that illustrious descendant of Prince Crispin; for a single room here actually serves me not only for “parlour and kitchen and hall,” but for bedroom, library, store room, cellar, and pantry. It is on the ground, and without a window shutter, so that should any of the wild Buckingham mountaineers that “inhabit lax” in the woods and commons on my flanks and rear (and a gaunt ruffian-looking race they are) think it a “good thing” to rob and murder a Master in Chancery, they have nothing to do but open the window and jump in, unless they prefer kicking in a rotten door panel. I have, however, got a few boards nailed together to put up against my window at night, which would require a blow to beat them in loud enough to wake me, and I have my trusty carbine with a spring bayonet ready loaded at my bedside. Moreover, I take care to apprise all cruisers in my neighbourhood that they will find some risk in boarding, by firing morning and evening guns. You may insure me, therefore, perhaps, at a small war premium.

Now if you or any body should ask what I can find here to repay me for the privations of such a hermitage, I answer, "Come and see." If any man can look unmoved at the grandeur and varied beauties of the extensive landscape before me, let him stick to his carpeted drawing-rooms in town! But perhaps he may like better the picturesque and the sheltered loveliness of nature, fertile little highland valleys, where corn fields and verdant commons that have yet escaped the Vandal enclosing acts are shut in by eminences crowned and fringed with luxuriant beech woods. Then let him walk with me one furlong only from my hermitage into my back grounds, and he shall enter into scenes to his choice; and in a walk of four or five miles to Missenden, &c. find such a variety of them that he will be at a loss to say which charmed him the most. Or does the luxuriantly beautiful and rich . . . a prospect extensive but not vast, a panorama the most distant lines of which are not remote enough to be obscure, but defining with vivid and varied tints the extremity of the horizon . . . I say, does a landscape like this delight him? then let him go with me to the verge of these uplands till the valley of Missenden bursts upon him, and descend as I did this morning from the heights that overhang that town, with the sun basking on their sides, and on the hills that front them.

But I am very bad at description, though not at admiration of these things. I have no pencil; but I have eyes, ay, and I have lungs too, and legs, and the former inhale with delight the cool and fragrant air around me, while the latter are exercised with more than wonted pleasure here, and with perfect exemption from fatigue, for I find what is rarely found on the uplands, a great extent of level ground in various directions. I can defy the sun, my great enemy, even in my noontide walks, and in the hottest weather. Indeed, if I could not, it would only keep me from emerging from the beech woods, which you know scarcely ever present the obstacle of impervious under-wood, or at least always have abundance of long alleys

where you are completely canopied, and yet with gleams here and there of sunshine, enough to dry the ground and exhale the fragrance. You know I always loved this country for that distinguishing feature (I wish Castlereagh had not spoiled the word) of hills crowned with beech; but I never liked it more than now, and in this particular situation. It is to the eye the best season, the autumnal tints just beginning to diversify the foliage. A Christian should have other localities to interest him than even those which lead us in our happiest hours to pious joy and holy admiration.

“These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! Thine this universal frame
Thus wondrous fair! Thyself how wondrous then!”

Better also than those which by obvious analogies or associations incline to high and virtuous contemplations:—

“Behold him seated on a mount serene,
Above the fogs of sense and passion’s storm;
All the black cares and tumults of this life
Like harmless thunders breaking at his feet:”

for these things may be thought and said, ay, and felt too, by abject souls. But blessed charity and active persevering zeal in our Master’s service, these are the great points, and we should choose places and every thing by them. He, too, loved the uplands, but He went up to a mountain to pray, and on a mountain He taught His disciples.

Really in this respect I hope to be benefited, and that not only by solitude, but the hill air itself, which commonly assists my spirits and quickens a little my dull intellectual powers. Here I have brought materials for the active usefulness I may best attempt—my *slave-grubbing*. I have also brought, what you thought might be advantageously substituted for or connected with it, the book containing materials for the life of our dear and excellent departed friend H. Thornton.

I have not been able, at least have not found oppor-

tunity, to read it till yesterday evening, and have not yet finished it; but have now a pretty good general view of the degree of assistance that might be found in it for a work of that kind. Its materials would go some way, but are not perhaps a tenth part of what we should want of fact, and of accurate chapter-and-verse fact, as to his private history. Public materials as to Sierra Leone, &c. might, no doubt, be easily got, and you could supply much if you should sit down to do so, getting somebody to minute down the facts you think a history of his life should contain. But a formidable difficulty presents itself to my mind as to your being his biographer or even his co-biographer in a work you avowed, or were known to have concurred in giving to the public. His public history runs so much parallel to your own, and you appear in so great a degree to have been instrumental in fixing his general political principles and conduct, that in doing justice to him you would seem to be praising yourself. He says himself in one place, "My intimacy with Wilberforce has had an influence on many important events of my life." In other places, which I cannot so easily turn to, he particularizes cases in which you were the chief author of several of his actions in parliament and his scheme of conduct there. &c. as well as (what the above extract refers to) your persuading him to take the lead in the affairs of Sierra Leone. To explain and justify his general line of conduct as "one of the party of no-party men," would in effect be like stating and defending your own. But you have perhaps thought of and have an answer to this objection.

I should not feel the same difficulties. Perhaps even my defence of that line of parliamentary conduct would not be the less impressive as coming from me, especially as I should at the same time maintain stoutly that my own different line of conduct (I mean the different line of conduct which readers, perhaps, might remember to have been mine,) is equally justifiable when dictated by right motives, and qualified by proper limitations. My opinion has been long settled that though to have a few

middle men or neutrals is not only consistent with, but in a high degree useful to, the well working of the constitutional machine, and that to be one of these is highly becoming and right in a man of independent fortune, and the representative of a popular body; yet that a large infusion of such members would be fatal to the constitution, (as certainly so as universal suffrage itself, perhaps,) unless they should agree to give up particular opposition to measures they thought prudentially wrong, for the sake of general support to a government they thought right in the main; *i. e.* in other words, unless they renounced their own maxims, the maxims on which Babington always and inexorably acted, on which H. T. most commonly acted, and on which you have acted pretty uniformly of late, and took the very line of conduct which I endeavoured in general to pursue, though not, I am conscious, with undeviating consistency. Indeed my case was a difficult one, beyond even the ordinary situation of men brought in by the existing government, because Mr. Perceval was in circumstances to feel deeply the prejudice which the opposition of a known personal friend, as well as partisan in Parliament, always tends to produce. In many cases I was restrained by this feeling. It prevented my voting and speaking too against the Duke of York in Mrs. Clarke's business, and made me think it enough not to vote at all. In short, I think that I could do justice to H. T.'s public conduct without condemning my own, though you could not, perhaps, without praising your own.

Another difficulty, however, that occurred to me sooner, applies equally to us both, if not exclusively to me. Would it not be insincere, and have the effect of hypocrisy, if a biographer were to state the religious tenets of a man whom he generally holds up as an object of imitation and praise, without noticing his own dissent from them, where they are different from his own? I am not sure, however, that you have any such difference to avow or conceal. I certainly thought his opinions and yours were much alike. But I have come to a part in which he states himself, to my surprise, to be a

Calvinist, and in reference, I think, to predestination, only qualifying by saying that he does not hold it of such importance as Dr. Milner does, or something to that effect. Now I doubt whether you could go so far, or rather I am confident you could not. As to my own difficulties on this subject, they would be wider, as I need not tell you.

After all, the grand difficulty with me is to decide whether my duties to the African cause, or rather the West Indian slave cause, can be reconciled with such an undertaking.

I am, my dear W.,

Ever very affectionately yours,

J. S.

Pray do not send any long answer to this, unless you can employ another pen than your own. A few words will do. Address to me "Post-office, Wendover, Bucks." (Observe,—not the "Temple of Peace.") I know not whether you are aware of the cause of this appellation. Mr. O., by whose courtesy I occupy this room, bought the Temple of Peace exhibited in the park on the occasion of the peace, and has actually been foolish enough to hoist it on the carcass of an unfinished house, contiguous to the room I occupy.

If we should have a thunder-storm, I shall be afraid of it as a conductor, for this is the very summit of the hills, and it rises to a great height above the building, with the flag-staff at its four corners;—as to the flags, they are all blown away.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO RALPH CREYKE, ESQ.

Near London, January 7, 1820.

My dear Sir,

I should be dishonest if I were not to confess that I was almost sorry to see your handwriting this morning; at least, for it was no more, I wished the arrival of your letter had been delayed till to-morrow:—

for I had intended to write to you to-day, and should have so done a week ago, but for my having been indisposed—very opportunely; for I was unable to attend our discussions, when they were most interesting, on the Libel Bill. Our debates are not what they once were. I am myself, indeed, arrived at such a period, at least of parliamentary life, very near forty years, as to have become

Laudator temporis acti
Se puero——

But without any such prejudice, we contend in a lower region than when Pitt and Fox, or North and Fox and Burke, were the combatants; not but that Canning displays as much talent, and with one exception, is as finished an orator as I ever heard. But yet—when he is at his best, I am always admiring Canning—when Pitt and Fox were, in full song they were themselves forgotten, and the hearer was hurried along by the torrent, without having leisure to ask by what name it was distinguished, or to estimate the height or the swell or the rapidity of the current.

But I blame myself for not first having assured you that I can sympathize with you on your family loss; of which your letter gives me the first intimation.

I hope you in the East Riding are suffering less than in any other part almost of England; for I am concerned to say that the pressure at present is not on the manufacturers only. Yet I believe that if the object were to benefit them, there is no way by which that object could be so securely effected as by improving the condition of the agriculturist. Our home market is far more important to us than any foreign market, perhaps, indeed certainly, more important to us than all our foreign markets put together. Did you ever scrutinize so as thoroughly to settle your judgment on that delicate question which respects our currency and paper credit?

But, alas! my eyes have been admonishing me to forbear, and therefore I must draw towards a conclusion. And how naturally (as you go back at last to the same

key note in music from which you set out) does my mind revert to our domestic concerns, which touch us more to the quick by far, or rather enter our heart's core more deeply, and were so intended to do by the great Creator of all things, than all matters which have their places, however important, in outer circles. Another young man, also of Trinity, was carried off, not very long ago, quite unexpectedly. I have been much struck with the circumstance of my having survived so many of my contemporaries. I well remember the late Dr. Warren declaring in the spring of 1788 that I had no stamina at all, and could not live more than a few weeks. Yet both he and poor Pitcairne, one of the strongest-limbed men I ever beheld, are gone many years ago, and I apparently stronger than I was at that time! How strange is it, that with these striking lessons, so strongly enforced on us, of the uncertainty of life, we should see the greater part of mankind around us, if not firmly believing, yet still farther from decidedly disbelieving, the great truths which the Scriptures state of what is to follow, yet sailing down the stream with much less care concerning the grand decisive issue, than about any other rever-sionary possession which is of any considerable value! But I may check my surprise at this, and change my phrase of seeing others thus comparatively indifferent about what they would themselves acknowledge to be infinitely important. I myself feel this same discrepancy between the decision of the understanding, the conclusion of the judgment, and the feeling of the heart; and it is by labour and effort that I enforce on my affections the practical inferences from propositions which intellectually I recognize as true and even unquestionable. Indeed to have acquired the habit of living under this impression of the reality of eternal things is to be spiritually minded; and it is a temper I believe which can be produced by no unassisted human efforts, but of which we shall never remain destitute for want of heavenly aid, if we pursue the course prescribed in Scripture for the attainment of it. May you and I, my dear sir, possess this just estimate of things more and

more ! I must say that I become more and more convinced from experience, that where it does predominate in its just and proper bearing, it tends to render men better in every state and relation of life. How naturally we pour forth our stream of thought, when we address a friend either in conversation or on paper ; yet my stream has been so often arrested in its course from frequent interruptions, that when set a flowing again, with all the intervening mass of matters filling the channel, I wonder if it has preserved its identity ; if it has, it is like one of the rivers we read of, which runs through a lake, and issues the same from the opposite extremity. I must now break off for want of time, even more than of eyesight, I have otherwise an unexhausted budget for you.

Do tell me when you write about the state of the farmers within your circle. A very intelligent land agent told me lately, that the country could in no way be so well served as by Parliament's granting a large sum to commissioners, to be lent on good security to land owners for improving their estates. My plan, as every body has a nostrum, is to allow all commons under two hundred acres to be divided, enclosed, &c. by substituting a cheaper process than our parliamentary one ;—for instance, letting proofs be brought before the Quarter Sessions. I am afraid small commons will not bear the expense of an application to Parliament. Farewell, my dear Sir, and believe me, with kind regards to all your family circle,

Ever sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO DON AUGUSTIN
ARGUELLES.

March 28, 1820.

Sir,

I need not assure you that the name of Arguelles has long been peculiarly dear to every lover of liberty,

and in a particular degree to every friend of the Abolition of the slave trade; and if the debates which take place in our House of Commons had been preserved, they would testify with what grief and shame I myself lamented the cruel and unjust confinement under which you suffered. From time to time we inquired about you, still cherishing the hope, that ere long you would, one way or other, be restored to liberty; and when the late Spanish revolution was announced, your deliverance was anticipated as one of its earliest benefits to your country. But the newspapers now state that you are appointed the Minister of Grace and Justice; surely an appointment the most appropriate and auspicious for the most deeply injured of the human race.

I know not how far the rigours of your unjust confinement allowed you to become acquainted with the events that were passing in the world; but I am sure that if they did, you could not learn with indifference all the efforts that were making for delivering Africa from her European tormentors; and it might well infuse some drops of comfort into that bitter cup which was allotted to you, to be justly conscious that the disposition manifested by your country to join the other confederated powers in terminating the wrongs of Africa had probably been produced in no small degree by the force of your reasoning and the power of your eloquence. The period is at length arriving, when the beginning of this good work, made in Spain by abolishing the slave trade north of the line, was to be finally brought to its conclusion by an absolute and total Abolition. The 20th May next was named as the day on which Spain declared that her subjects should no longer be suffered to carry on a system which, under the name of commerce, includes in it whatever injustice and cruelty could perpetrate for the misery of its wretched victims. And can we entertain the slightest apprehension that a revolution, the very watchword of which is liberty, can endanger the fulfilment of a treaty, the object of which is to deliver the most miserable of all captives from the most galling of all fetters? No, rather would your revolution have

suggested the hope of deliverance to these poor sufferers, than that it would dash the cup of freedom, when for the first time about to be presented, from their lips. Let then the same eloquent voice which formerly pleaded the cause of these poor creatures be once more heard to pronounce the decree which shall declare their deliverance. It is by a singular ordination of Providence that it should be reserved for you, their advocate in the season of their misery and degradation, to pronounce the ordinance which is to declare their admission to the rank of human beings, and to recognize the right which as our fellow-creatures they possess to the common claims of justice and humanity.

You probably are scarcely aware that the horrible traffic in human flesh is now carrying on under the Spanish flag with circumstances of augmented cruelty. All the former horrors of the slave trade have been outdone in some recent instances. But this fresh aggravation of its evils was not wanted to convince your judgment or call forth your feelings. Yet it will prompt you to resume your former labours with increasing ardour, and to prosecute them with redoubled energy. I will detain you no longer than while congratulating you on your own deliverance, I congratulate also those who have so long been our common clients, that you are once more enabled to exert your well-known powers in their behalf. Lord Holland, who is accustomed to correspond with friends in Spain, has been so obliging as to promise me to forward to you this letter; and he assures me that you understand English perfectly, and that I may therefore spare myself the effort I was about to make to have it translated into Spanish. I remain,

With great respect and regard,

Your faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO SAMUEL ROBERTS, ESQ.

June, 1820.

My dear Sir,

To you I will frankly confess that I should myself have given the preference to the proposition suggested in the letter in the *Sheffield Iris*—that of moving for the restoration of the Queen's name to the Liturgy. I myself have never concealed my opinion that it was a wrong step to leave the Queen's name out, and consequently I could not but have wished for its re-insertion. But I had all but an absolute certainty that this motion would be rejected, and then we should have had no resource. The ministers had been contending, as it is supposed, with the King very strenuously: they had once even resigned their offices; and I presume that they must have considered the omission of the Queen's name as part of a compromise to which they were bound to adhere. Be this as it may, it is notorious that a few days before my motion, they called all their adherents together, and explained to them without reserve, that all the members of the Cabinet had agreed to resign their offices if the question for restoring the Queen's name to the Liturgy should be carried against them. Now, the influence of government in the House of Commons is so great, that I could not have hoped to carry a motion, against which all who possess offices would have fought so furiously, as well as all those who conceived that in our present circumstances a change of government might throw all into confusion.

It was in this state of things that a careful perusal of the papers containing an account of the conferences between the King's ministers and the Queen's law-officers suggested to me the expedient of which I had every reason to expect the success. The law-officers had not originally included the restoration of the Queen's name to the Liturgy, as any one of the chief particulars of her claims; and when they did mention this restoration, they declared that it was asked as a recognition of her rights and a vindication of her character: and then they

suggested that if it could not be granted in substance, an equivalent might be found for it, such e. g. as her being introduced into any of the courts on the continent. This it was that constituted the ground of my hopes. It appeared to me that an Address of the House of Commons, assuring her that her giving way would not be construed into any wish to shrink from inquiry, but only to indicate afresh the disposition she had already expressed to sacrifice her own wishes and feelings to the declared sense of the House of Commons, especially if this Address should receive the assent of a large majority, would be as good an equivalent as that which the law-officers had specified. In fact I had every reason to believe her Majesty would have acquiesced, but for circumstances which I would rather state to you in person than by letter. Give me credit however for not assuring you on light grounds, that the Queen's chief law-officer recommended that acquiescence. You yourself must have observed in the newspapers that some of the chief opposition members in both Houses maintained that, whether my motion should be accepted or rejected, it was impossible that the inquiry could be prosecuted. This was a sad obstacle; since undoubtedly I hoped that the Queen's comparing her situation in the two opposite alternatives would have led to my success. But after the Queen's rejection of our mediation, there could have been no hope of success in moving for the restoration of her name, and indeed I must own it would have been at that time an improper measure.

Any one who has been so long as myself in public life must have lived in it to little purpose, not to be prepared to have his conduct misrepresented and his views misconstrued. I am not therefore surprised that the great part even of intelligent bystanders do not advert to the suggestion of the Queen's law-officers, on which alone my motion was grounded; but consider me as proposing from my own mere speculation, that the Queen should consent to give way on the disputed question concerning the Liturgy. I shall be glad to hear from you from time to time, especially during the present very

interesting state of the public mind. I remain, my dear sir, with cordial esteem and regard,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

HON. WILLIAM LAMB (now LORD MELBOURNE) TO
WM: WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Whitehall, August 2, 1820.

My dear Sir,

I have this morning received your letter, and am very sorry indeed not to have had an opportunity of conversing with you before you left London, upon the present state of public affairs, although I am very much afraid no satisfactory conclusion could have been come to. I see the danger as clearly, and in as strong a light as you do, but I do not see any step that can be taken with a rational hope or prospect of averting it. I met Mr. Rumbold, the member for Yarmouth, in the street yesterday, who like all other rational persons, or rather like all other persons, for I never witnessed so general an apprehension, is much alarmed, and he told me that he had seen you at Lord Carrington's, and that your idea was, that there should be county meetings, to petition the Crown and the Parliament to put a stop to the whole inquiry. However desirable such a course might have been at the beginning, it is impossible not to see that there are great difficulties attending upon it in the present state of the affair, now that the Crown has already instituted and the House of Lords is pledged to prosecute the investigation. But the weightiest objection to such a measure appears to me the extreme uncertainty of the result of such meetings, and the doubt whether they would not tend to inflame and excite, rather than to tranquillize discontent and irritation. Supposing that in some few counties the influence of the gentlemen, &c. might be sufficient to procure the adoption of wise and temperate resolutions, there would be great danger in far the greater number that other counsels and other feelings

would prevail. A spirit of opposition would be excited; the same misrepresentations would take place as in the case of your motion; it would be said to be all done in concert with, and in subservience to, the views of the Ministry; the Queen would be exhorted and encouraged to accede to nothing; the whole attempt would be unsuccessful, and leave nothing behind it but more violent heats and increased unpopularity to the authors of it. These are the considerations which press strongly upon my mind; but I am conscious that perhaps I am too despairing in matters of this nature, and lean too much to the side of doing nothing, and awaiting the course of events. If there were a fair opening of success, the object is so great, that it would be true cowardice not to hazard something for it. I should be most glad to hear from you upon the subject, and so much do I esteem your opinion, that I shall this night write to Lord Dacre, who is most deeply impressed with the peril of the crisis, to consult him upon the subject. One misfortune is, that if any thing of this sort were advisable, it should have been set about long before. There is now hardly time enough left for effectual measures of this nature.

There is also a very great difficulty, which attends all such situations as that in which we are at present placed, and I cannot but suggest it for your consideration. I admit that there appears to me to be great danger of serious popular tumult and insurrection. I admit it to you, but I should be very loth to admit it generally, or to persons of whose judgment I had not a high opinion; because nothing aggravates danger of this kind so much as confessing fear; it encourages those from whom the danger proceeds, and may almost be said to produce the very evil it apprehends. Supposing then that this whole business were now to be concluded by the extraordinary means of an exertion of influence on the part of the property of the country, would it not create in the disaffected an exaggerated notion of the present peril, and of their own strength? Would they not say to themselves, the higher orders, &c. were sensible that this trial, if persevered in, would have brought about a

revolution; they are aware of our strength, they fear it; and would not such reasoning bring about and hasten that struggle to which, it is impossible to conceal from one's self, every thing in this country appears to tend? That such appearances may be, as appearances in politics often are, delusive and fallacious, is my earnest hope and prayer, and I remain,

My dear Sir,

With great respect and esteem,

Yours very sincerely,

WILLIAM LAMB.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bledlowe, August 31, 1820,
Thursday evening.

My dear Wilberforce,

I never come here but to receive good; transient, perhaps, but good of the right kind! No wonder. It was through my dear S.'s kindness that my connection with Bledlowe commenced, and it has pleased God to make you and her the instruments of good to me in almost every thing in which you have had any influence on my concerns.

But I should have made a wider though less grateful remark. How much of what is good for us do we lose in London? How much is the heart made better by the country? You, and even I, perhaps, do more good for others in the former, but the latter is the place where I learn what is good for myself. I love the country; I love its natural innocent joys; I love its natural instructive sorrow too. Here my son and daughter are so conversant with the "short and simple annals of the poor" around them, that I am always led by them to individualize in the most impressive manner those abstract ideas of the sufferings of the lower orders which engage our speculations so much, and our real sympathies so little, in town.

But I am abstracting here myself, when I sat down simply to narrate.

The bell tolled two hours ago while we were dining. Who is it you have to bury? A poor old man, *Folly* by name, who died on Monday last. Oh, I recollect the name. I used to laugh at his being simple enough to be persuaded to call his son Solomon. What is become of the boy Solomon Folly? &c. &c.

But my son returns. He has buried two bodies instead of one. And who is the other? Poor old Taylor from the workhouse; he died only this morning, but we have been obliged to bury him: the case was a mortification, and he was already offensive.

On further inquiries, I learnt that the deceased was a very honest, industrious old parishioner, who had with his wife lived creditably to the age of eighty, never calling on the parish for relief, till at last total inability to work had obliged them to do so (two or three years ago.) Shocking to relate, they were compelled to quit their long-loved cottage, and go into the poor-house, to their deep but patient affliction.

I sally into the churchyard. I find Friday the clerk and sexton, and who was late master of the poor-house, covering in the grave of poor old Taylor; I hear a panegyric upon him that makes me wish to be so covered in his stead; sober, humble, industrious, kind to his old helpmate, always regular in his devotions, &c. all that man can see of the best symptoms.

But the poor widow of this morning is disconsolate, and is hurt at his being buried so soon. I have been at the poor-house to comfort her, and think I have succeeded. But oh, what a tale! "We have lived together, sir, since twenty-two; and our ages were so near the same, I know not which was oldest; he was in his eightieth year. Then the suffering! He has laboured under a mortification ever since Christmas last, and has of late suffered terribly." Poor old woman! this which should have consoled her was rather her present chief topic of affliction! It is in heaven only that even our

kindest feelings will be rational. "Lo! these are they which have come out of great tribulation."

But where am I rambling? you do not want these suggestions, and yet, my dear Wilberforce, I have nobody that I think of writing to in such moods but you.

God bless you and yours, and may it be not among your trials to be bereft like poor old and nearly blind M. B. Taylor.

Yours ever, very affectionately,
J. STEPHEN.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed—"True picture of his pious mind.")

Uxbridge, Sunday evening, September 24, 1820,
eight o'clock.

"A faithful friend is the medicine of life; and they that fear the Lord shall find him."—Ecclesiasticus, vi. 16.

My dear Wilberforce,

Here I am on my way to town. My landlady at my request brought me a Bible. It was a folio, with the apocrypha. Why do we Protestants not make more use of those books, since the Church articles allow it? They certainly contain many most sublime passages: and if we had a right to judge from internal evidence what books were written by inspiration, or fell within the apostle's definition, "all Scripture," &c., I know of none in the Old Testament, the Book of Psalms excepted, that I should be more disposed to place in the sacred canon than this book of Ecclesiasticus. But the council of Laodicea, it seems, has stopped our right of judging by evidence internal or external. These, however, are the crude notions of a very unlearned man.

I have had one of my very pleasant Sundays—long solitary walking, fine weather, and the most exhilarating views of the goodness of the Creator in the beauties of the landscape around me, and then every thing falling

out kindly and beyond expectation. It has been one of the days in which I cannot help thinking that the kind, tender, judicious spirit of your dear sister has been hovering over me, holding the reins of my fancy, and determining all, as far as was consistent with the freedom of my moral choice. Mistake me not; such thoughts do not diminish, they rather increase, my gratitude to her God and mine. He is not less the All-in-all, the gracious Source of every good, because He employs His ministering spirits in His works of benignity towards me.

I was obliged to be in town early to-morrow morning. I rejected the stages, because it was Sunday. They shall have no abetting of their vile profanations and their robbing the poor brutes of their Sabbath rest from me. The same objection applies more strongly to posting. Yet the night and early morning were tempestuous, and the rain continued till near ten. It was hard to frame a plan for being twice at church in my way, and yet get hither before nightfall, even supposing the weather to grow and continue fair, of which there seemed no probability. Yet if I could have commanded weather and every thing else, the business could not have been managed more to my comfort and satisfaction. I was at Missenden church in the morning, as for good reasons I wished to be. I heard Mr. — at Chalfords St. Giles's, in the afternoon as I also wished, and had several little unconcerted, yet necessary accommodations to effect all this and make it as agreeable as possible, which it would be tedious to explain, the coincidence of which is really very striking and strange. But these things are by no means rare to me: they are almost invariable. I should fear to write in such a strain to almost any body but you. Yet why should it be thought presumptuous, why should it be thought degrading to the bounteous, all-pervading, all-directing Providence of Him who has declared the hairs of our heads are all numbered, and that though not a sparrow falls to the ground without His care, we are of more value in His sight than many sparrows? Such views help us to trust in Him, help us

to love Him, and what gives Him our hearts is not a trifle in His gracious, condescending, infinitely, inconceivably, condescending, regard.

I stop to buy a doll, a hopping frog, trumpery of any kind, for my little grandchildren; and why? Because, ridiculously trivial though the things are in themselves, they lead them to love grandpapa. But there is irreverence in every possible illustration of this subject, as well as infinite inadequacy. You will understand me, and that is enough, and so good night; for I must to bed, meaning to be on the tramp again by five in the morning.

Yours, my dear and faithful friend,
 "The medicine of my life," ever very affectionately,
 J. S.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Bath, September 29, 1820.

My dear Stephen,

It quite vexes me not to be able to pour forth a little of the effusions which your last affectionate and to me delightful letter called forth (delightful, because I love Stephen, and it was Stephen all over, and as a picture should be, the likeness rather of his best). But company are actually up-stairs, come to dinner, and I am not dressed yet.—About your last letter, however, I have one word to say. I wish the idea of our Saviour had occurred to you: we are expressly, told, "Giving thanks always, &c. &c. through Jesus Christ." I like to associate Christ with all my religious ideas, as the object of gratitude and love, and God, the supreme God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, also.

I must break off; but this is a practical remark, and I could not have been easy without making it. O, my dear friend, how thankful should we be for knowing truths, compared with which all the world's wisdom is vanity and folly.

Poor Chancellor!
 Poor Master in Chancery!
 Poor great and rich men!

Ever affectionately yours,
 W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. WILBERFORCE.

Jan. 25, 1821.

My day ever since breakfast time has been consumed by two peers of the realm; Lord C. had a good share of it, but I am told that by the clock Lord Harrowby was full two hours and a half with me, and I have barely time to scribble my letter to you; the bulletin report is—Well, I thank God. I have several visits to pay, and would you believe it, I am just now drawn into volunteering a dinner with Inglis, to meet Walter Scott.

I enclose a letter from P., which breathes so friendly a spirit that I think you and the girls ought to see it, in order to do justice to his kindness. I love to make people like each other better, and I often regret the tattling system, which prevails so generally, and from which I grieve to say many, of whom it would be uncharitable not to think favourably on the whole, are nevertheless not exempt. It is indeed a striking instance of our natural self-deception, that persons who would quite shrink from the idea of committing most of those crimes which are condemned in the word of God, think little of the vices of the tongue. But any one who is duly jealous of himself will always watch most carefully against the sins which are the least unpopular in his own circle, and certainly the great evil of what is called the religious world is *chatteration*.

Pray let the girls see my letter. Young people ought especially to guard against this fault, and when I write to you now I consider myself as addressing them also. I beg you will write occasionally to — and —; their sisters also should write to them pretty fre-

quently. I assure you, both from my own experience and from that of others, that at their period of life the frequent recurrence of home associations, and of sisterly affection, has a peculiarly happy effect both on the character and manners. Can you send — your newspaper after reading it; he has repeatedly asked to have one, and I don't like to send him an opposition paper? Return the Courier I send to-day, and if you have any convenient opportunity you might send me my Parkhurst's Lexicon. Farewell, with kindest remembrances to the dear girls,

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. HUGH PEARSON,
(now DEAN OF SALISBURY).

London, February 1, 1821.

My dear Sir,

I have not a little regretted the various hindrances which have from day to day prevented my sooner writing to you again, agreeably to the assurance contained in my last letter. Even now I cannot write to you as fully as I wish. Yet I am really anxious to state to you the considerations which influence my judgment in the question of restoring the Queen's name to the Liturgy; because my persuasion that this step is imperiously dictated by sound policy, so far from being owing in any degree to my feeling less reverence and attachment towards the throne than my countrymen in general, arises out of those very emotions, and from my deep conviction of the inestimable benefits which we owe to the monarchical branch of our constitution.

Unhappily, from various causes which are but too obvious, the bulk of the more religious and sober of the middling and lower classes of this country have imbibed a persuasion, call it a prejudice, on this subject, which nothing will eradicate. To you I need not remark what pains are taken by the seditious abusers of the liberty of the press to poison and irritate the minds of the better

disposed part of our community, and this affair of the Liturgy supplies them with a topic better suited to their purpose than any other that could be devised. They will not admit that the Queen is prayed for substantially though not by name, and they unjustly, I grant, impute her exclusion to the personal hatred of the King. And let her be ever so bad, they say, is she too bad to be prayed for? And then they bring up and place in the most invidious points of view, and invest with the blackest colouring, all the stories they have heard, or rather read, about the King himself when Prince of Wales, and object that he at least has no right to be called most religious, &c. Then it happens most sadly, that the best class of the community, the agricultural class, is suffering the most extreme depression, and I fear it is not likely to mend. And we know but too well that people in such a state of wretchedness are just prepared to become the dupes of the factious agitators, who know too well how to use their advantages. Again, consider that as the Queen is prayed for in all the Dissenting and Methodist chapels throughout the kingdom, there is a standing premium operating against the Church of England, and the people will have their present feelings maintained by the weekly repetition of the service.

I was very sorry to be unable to find a convenient opportunity of speaking the other night, when, as you will see, I voted with Ministers. I should have liked to speak my mind a little plainly on some topics, more especially on that system of party which now reigns with such avowed predominance. It is that, in my mind, which has done more harm than any other cause to the character of Parliament. It so tinctures and distorts the view of the best men, and so biases their judgments, as to make them act in ways which you would previously have thought impossible. What else could have made Lord Milton subscribe to the Queen's plate, and the Duke of Bedford to the subscription for Hone? What else can render our old nobility blind to the efforts that are using with such mischievous industry to pull down the throne, and with it the

Church, and all that preserves the order and peace of society? But I must lay down my pen, only let me not forget to tell you that I should have wished the concession to be made by the King himself, and to be avowedly for the sake of his people, to prevent their being misled and seduced by artful and bad men, and thereby alienated from their King and country. My persuasion is, that his Majesty would fix in the minds of the well-disposed part of the population a deeper sense of his regard for the public welfare than by any other possible expedient. O how much are persons to be pitied who are placed in these high stations of dignity and danger! When young, every wish anticipated, every desire gratified; when older, every motive calumniated, every action perverted; and above all, they are in danger, from the multiplicity of their concerns, of neglecting the one thing needful; and it is in truth the grand vice of the modern system of Christianity, that it does not enough represent Christianity in her true character, that of holding out the arms of invitation to persons of all ages and conditions, offering them the best blessings our nature can receive, pardon and peace, and love and joy, holiness and happiness. That you and I, my dear sir, may more and more largely partake of this blessed portion, is the cordial wish and prayer of,

Yours sincerely and affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ———.

(Intended to reach the King's eye.)

March 6, 1821.

My dear Sir,

After having been confined for a week to my chamber, I have just now heard a piece of intelligence, and that from no mean authority, which would have been a cordial to me had my nerves required a refresher. I mean that the Queen sent last night to say that she would thankfully receive the money offered

her; and it was added, that she would now be glad of her name's being put as a matter of grace and favour into the Liturgy, because if she were abroad, the omission would operate so unfavourably on her. The prospects thus opened to us are really cheering. For remember, and that is what you and other friends have not sufficiently considered, that it is not that I, or any experienced man, ever supposed the bulk of the people would long feel acutely about the omission of the Queen's name, but that the omission would tend to produce an estimation (a most false one) of the King's mind and motives, and a state of alienation of heart which would help to render them the more easy dupes of the artful, bad men who are trying to seduce them from reverence and regard for all they ought to respect and love. But now, my dear sir, what an opportunity for the king to establish himself in the good-will of the people, when it will clearly and indubitably appear to be the result of his own spontaneous grace! Really

“Deus hæc tempora,” &c.

I thought I would throw out this hint to you. I do really think there scarcely ever was such an opening.

Never did you utter a more just word than that of prudence, which you suggested in a former letter. Good people are not always prudent people. The vices of the tongue, to speak honestly, are far too little regarded by those whom we may hope do make a conscience of their words and works; yet how strong is Solomon and St. James, and above all, our Saviour! I myself have often had this truth enforced on me. A public man of sixty-one and a half, for thirty years an intimate of a prime minister, must be incurable if he is a babbler.

With kind remembrances to Mrs. —, I remain,

Ever yours sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A SON AT COLLEGE.

Kensington Gore, April 3, 1821.

My dear —,

Never be shy in speaking to me on the subject of money. I trust, indeed, that there will be no subject on which you and I shall ever feel any shyness in our intercourse. Let me beg you always to deal unreservedly with me, even when you may be conscious you may have to state what it may be painful to me to know. You shall always find me disposed to behave to you in all respects like a real friend; and remember, you never can have a friend whose interests are more identical with your own, or whose credit is more implicated in yours. Young men, too often, are not enough aware of the evils which result from weakening confidence, which was beautifully, as well as justly, said to be a plant of slow and difficult growth in an aged bosom.

On this topic of money it may become necessary for me, I fear, to speak to all my children. This returning so hastily to a metallic currency, a subject on which your master* has written with the pen of a political economist of no ordinary ability, has so suddenly increased the value of money, and brought down the prices of all raw produce, that our farmers are gradually falling into ruin, and I shall be very glad indeed if the lowering my rents 25 per cent. (and they were always ordered to be fixed on fair and moderate terms) will enable my tenants to pay me the remainder. Yet to a man who, like me, has never designedly saved any thing, such a diminution of income, a fourth, is not very convenient—but certainly we should all learn and practise economy. Economy is not inconsistent with generosity; on the contrary, unless people are as affluent as I myself was before my marriage, there can be no generosity without it: indeed, I ought not to have excepted myself then, for it was by being economical in every branch of my establishment, having but

* The Bishop of Llandaff.

one house, one pair of horses, a less expensive table, less costly furniture, &c., than other people of my own fortune, that I was able to act with a generosity from which, I am sure, had mere self-gratification been my object, I should have been abundantly recompensed.

You would scarcely suppose, my dear —, by the way in which I run on, that I am sadly stinted for time this morning; such, however, is the fact; but when I begin writing to you, I find it very difficult to leave off; I must, however, very unwillingly change my correspondent, not lay down my pen. Farewell, my very dear —, and believe me

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, April 22, 1821.

My dear Friend,

Never, I beseech you, make an apology to me about not writing—I am always grieved when I am under the necessity of adding a feather to your load of cares. I never meant you should subscribe to Frome Church. I told them that your large and liberal charity purse did not suffice to the demands made upon it. Should any thing occur to you in the way of advice, it would be useful. This is the third church in this neighbourhood for which I have been called upon to give my pittance within a few months. Clifton promises very well.

How did your kind letter, received yesterday, cast down the high imaginations which your preceding one had raised! I had lived, and made others live, upon KING HENRY THE FIRST* ever since! We are naturally looking to you as the highly favoured among men, to be the grand agent of Providence to consummate the glorious work to which He has, in His mercy, been pleased

* Christophe.

to call you—that of being the instrument of giving that liberty, wherewith Christ has made them free, to the souls of our black brethren, which you have in a measure obtained for their bodies. And now, by an inscrutable Providence, your organ of pleading is taken away. God's ways are not as our ways—we must adore now, we shall understand hereafter. My poor unworthy prayers are constantly and fervently offered up for the restoration of your voice, and preservation of your life.—It is a dying world! Dear ——! What a saint has heaven gained! and what a mother have her six helpless babes lost? Lady —— wrote me a very affecting account of the whole. But I had not heard of ——'s domestic sorrows till I got your letter. I cannot guess how people who have no religion bear their afflictions and trials, when to the most pious and submissive they cost so dear!

The enclosed is to thank the artist for a present of your print. I have now five, each of which has some one characteristic merit. Slater is a pious as well as ingenious man.

My late neighbour, Whalley, who is living at Brussels, writes me that he is lodging in the same hotel with Cam-basceres. They have much intercourse. He assures him that Buonaparte used to kick and cuff his marshalls, and knock down poor Josephine. He says his angry passions were always at work—that he was never silent one minute.

Patty and I have not been out of doors for more than seven months. We are now only waiting for a western breeze to break prison.

A friend of mine was lately present at a Bible meeting in Ireland.—Of all the birds in the air, who do you think was in the chair? Old Edgeworth. The nobleman who was to have presided was taken ill: they were at a loss, and picked up this old sinner in the street, and told him he must go in and speak. "What must I say?" said he—"it is so utterly out of my way; I know nothing about the Bible; give me a few heads." They did, and he made an excellent speech, highly eulogizing

the sacred book, as that from which we first received our principles, and all that was good in us!! I am afraid we have other presidents not much better, though few, I believe, take such large strides towards atheism as this poor man! Yet they say it has helped the cause with the irreligious, for no one can say that Edgeworth is a fanatic. I would not write on thus, but that it requires no answer. Love to Mrs. W. and her dear children. I wish one of them would send me three lines to say how you are.

May God Almighty restore you!

H. MORE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A DAUGHTER.

Kensington Gore, Sunday evening, June, 1821.

My dearest ———,

I trust I need not assure you that the letter which I received from you a few days ago gladdened my heart, and that not with a transient joy, but with solid and permanent satisfaction. It is now your business, my dear child, to endeavour to strengthen the foundation of all Christian graces, by learning more and more habitually to live and walk by faith and not by sight. Accustom yourself to be spiritually-minded, which, as the apostle truly says, is both life and peace. Frequent self-examination is one of the means which you will find eminently useful for this end. You would do well to practise it in the middle of the day as well as in the morning and evening. A very few moments will suffice for a general retrospect of the past morning. I have often kept written on a small slip of paper a note of my chief besetting sins, against which it was especially necessary that I should be habitually watching and guarding; of the chief Christian graces which I wished to cultivate; of the grand truths which I desired to bear in remembrance: and I used to look over this paper at my seasons of prayer or of self-examination. My chief duties and relations (such as father, brother, friend,

acquaintance, master,) were down on this paper, and were thus kept in constant view. But in using this or any other expedient, you will, I am sure, remember ever to be looking up for that grace which can alone enable us to will or to do what is well pleasing to God. It is a very different thing to acknowledge this as a doctrinal tenet, and to live under the habitual impression of its truth, and to be carrying on, as it were, a continual intercourse with heaven by ejaculatory prayer.

I rejoice to think that my dear girl is striving to live under the practical influence of this blessed principle of spiritual-mindedness; and having been engaged in prayer for you, and knowing that to-morrow I should be extremely engrossed, and indeed not to-morrow merely, but for the whole week, I resolved to do that which you must observe I scarcely ever have done on this day, I mean, to write to my absent daughter. The truth is, that I have always been afraid, if I should make a practice of writing on a Sunday even to my children, lest they should adopt the same habit without so much necessity for it as I can plead from the little command I have of my own time; and there is nothing, you must have observed, of which I have always been more jealous than of any thing which might tend to impair the sanctity and spirituality of the Lord's day. I think that often good people have been led by the terms of the fourth commandment to lay more stress on the strictness of the Sunday than on its spirituality; on its being the day on which we are to make it our business, our set work, to cultivate our acquaintance with the invisible world, to cultivate our love both of God, of Christ, and of our fellow-creatures. Even in Isaiah's time, indeed, this spiritual improvement of this blessed interval from the cares and occupations of life was understood and enjoined. You must remember that remarkable passage, "If thou make the Sabbath a delight," &c.: and it is observable, that the reward of obedience that is promised is, "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord" (ch. lviii. towards the end), thus, as in other instances, intimating to us beyond dispute,

by inference, that we may enjoy a particular grace or practise a particular duty, though heaven-derived, from being commanded to possess and abound in them. But I am called away, and for the present must say farewell. While I rejoice that my dear —— is employed so rationally, so usefully, in a manner also so pleasing to God, and so happily for herself, I cannot but look forward to the time of our again meeting and living a little quietly in the country, if it may please God, with some earnestness of desire. But it is right that we should abstain from all aërial castle building, and remember that not only the time is short, but even uncertain. We know not what a day may bring forth. Let us therefore be doing on the day the duties of the day, and then leave the future to that gracious Being who has declared Himself faithful to his promises. This world is not our rest; and it is best for us that our schemes for the future should often be disappointed, in order to teach us our true condition. For even with all the admonitions we are continually receiving of the uncertainty of all human things, we are but too apt to be forming for ourselves plans of future imaginary pleasure. I have been writing latterly, scarcely looking at my pen—but I hope I am legible. Farewell.

Ever affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO PRINCE CZARTORYSKI.

Marden Park, near Godstone, August 14, 1821.

Sir,

The present of a curious Bible with which your Highness lately honoured me manifests that I still live in your remembrance, and assuredly I retain a lively recollection of the friendly intercourse with which your Highness favoured me, when in England. Let me now return your Highness my best acknowledgments for so obliging a mark of your esteem; and let me at the same time avail myself of the opportunity afforded by Mr.

Sienkiewick's return to his own country, for assuring your Highness of my best wishes for your health, usefulness, and happiness.

Remembering the interesting topics on which we conversed together, and the attention which your Highness paid to our various institutions for the improvement and benefit of mankind, I cannot but continue to feel a deep interest in your proceedings, and I only wish that your Highness had a field of operation and instrument to put in motion equal to your desires of benefiting your country and the human race.

By my last expression I am naturally reminded of those wretched beings who have been so long the objects of my concern. Your Highness, I am sure, will sympathize with me in the deep regret with which I inform you that, notwithstanding the solemn sentence of condemnation which was pronounced against the slave trade by the assembled powers of Europe at Vienna and Aix-la-Chapelle, it is still carried on, almost without restraint. My own country, indeed, (blessed be God!) is now delivered from the criminality and shame of this guilty traffic. But it is still carried on by several of the powers which joined in the condemnation of it, more especially by France—the last power we should have hoped that would have been tempted to take up a commerce in human beings, which Great Britain had indignantly abandoned, as being defiled by wickedness and cruelty. When men disclaim the laws of God and the dictates of justice and humanity, it is only by a sense of shame that they can be made to do their duty. And we may hope that if all virtuous and honourable men in the higher circles would bear their testimony against a system productive of so much misery and barbarism, the government of France would be ashamed of sacrificing the credit of their country for the sake of little, and, as our experience shows, a doubtful commercial benefit.

Let me then engage you, Prince, to be my confederate in this holy warfare. It is a service in which I am persuaded you will never regret to have engaged ;

and you may probably live to see your zealous benevolence rewarded by the growing civilization of Africa, rescued from the tormentors who are still prolonging her darkness and barbarism.

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE DUCHESS DE BROGLIE.

Marden Park, August 23, 1821.

Madame,

General Macaulay lately visited me in my country retreat, and gave me much curious, and, I am sorry to say, much painful intelligence. It was to me not the least interesting particular of it to hear that the Duchess de Broglie had mentioned me with kindness, and the intelligence confirmed an intention I had before formed, of addressing a few lines to her. You, I doubt not, will sympathize in the feelings which are excited in me, when I proceed to execute this duty—feelings of a tender, and, though not absolutely a painful, yet a melancholy kind.

It seldom happens that any one, on looking back for several years, can forbear to have a sigh, if not a tear, called forth by the retrospect. Such is indeed the case in this country, where, however, our insular situation has so exempted us from the stupendous reverses which France has exhibited, that the monotonous uniformity of our life may appear scarcely to furnish incidents to affect the heart; yet, in our motley world, the events of private life will, in any country, abundantly suffice for the purpose; and I should be void of all feeling, if my sensibility were not powerfully called forth in addressing the Duchess de Broglie. I rejoice to hear that you continue to direct your endeavours to the improvement and happiness of your fellow-creatures, and that the Duc de Broglie has manifested, that the poor unoffending victims of avarice, who are the objects of my special care, have not failed to attract the notice of a nobleman who is so justly respected and esteemed. I

rejoice to find that he recognises the claim, which weakness and misery have on the pity and the exertions of superior rank, talents, and virtue—that very weakness and misery, in which the low-minded and the mercenary, sometimes cunning, but never wise, see only the prey to satiate their base rapacity.

After the honourable earnestness with which your country united with all the other great powers of Europe at the congress of Vienna, and afterwards at Aix-la-Chapelle, in pronouncing sentence of condemnation on the slave trade as a system of wickedness and cruelty, the greatest that had ever affronted the justice and excited the commiseration of mankind, it cannot but be to the hopes of every good and humane mind most deeply disappointing, to see the government of France so far forgetful of its own duty and of the respect it owes to the character of the nation whose affairs it administers as to be tempted by a petty, and on the whole a very uncertain, profit, to return with avidity to this base traffic in the human species. The statesmen who can think of founding the social edifice of such a country as France on such a mean foundation, have indeed profited little from the moral lessons which have been afforded to mankind within the last twenty years.

I shall think it an honour, as well as a pleasure, to supply M. de Broglie with any intelligence he may desire; or, indeed, to execute any commission either for him or for yourself in this country.

Excuse this trespass on your time, and believe me,

With cordial respect and attachment,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

London, March 19, 1822.

My dear Friend,

I have been for above two months carrying about with me in my pocket-book the enclosed half note, not

thinking it quite right without necessity to put it into any hands but your own ; and hoping that, as I trust is now the case, the period would arrive when I might execute that intention. It is a contribution which I feel it an honour to make, as one of the fruits of our long and uninterrupted friendship ; and I hope a better motive than vanity confirms the gratifying recollection, that I first was the honoured instrument of leading you to set on foot your admirable plans for the benefit of your poor cottagers, by making you acquainted with the dark and desolate condition in which they then lay sunk. There is no part of your life on which I reflect with more pleasure than on the payment of your debt to the Barbarians, after settling your account so honourably with the Greeks,—the polished inhabitants of the London squares. It has pressed of late years, I fear, too hard on your pocket ; but it has been a blessed work, and I cannot but hope that it will prove a model which others will hereafter imitate.

My dear friend, may the Almighty continue to grant you the divine support, to sustain you under all your sufferings. It is an unspeakable satisfaction to reflect that they are all measured out by unerring wisdom and unfailing love, that therefore they are neither needless nor superfluous ; neither will they be fruitless. You will, I doubt not, rejoice hereafter in having gone through them, however trying to the flesh. That blessed sentence of the Apostle's, "I reckon that the light afflictions of this life, which," comparatively speaking, "are but for a moment, will work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." May your crown be rich as it will be incorruptible, and undefiled, and unfading ! And it is the best consolation your sympathizing friends can have . . . whether they manifest their affection by waiting at your bedside, or by the solicitude with which they receive the communications about you from those attendants in whose services they would themselves gladly share . . . that they may justly cherish the persuasion, that not a paroxysm of pain or a season of languor do you now experience which will not be

abundantly overpaid in that blessed world where sickness as well as sorrow shall have fled away. Farewell, farewell, my dear friend, may God, through Christ, and by His Holy Spirit, be your present support, and your everlasting portion!

Ever your sincere and affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

RT. HON. G. CANNING TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Gloucester Lodge, May 1, half past eleven.

My dear Wilberforce,

"My eyes just open on your" note. But though awake, I am not in a condition to get out of bed yet, for my cold and hoarseness have returned upon me, and I must turn round (after having finished this note) and try to sleep them off.

I can therefore better sympathize with you than you imagined. But I am very glad to know the cause (though very sorry for its existence) of your going away last night, because it will enable me to set many people right. I did not happen to fall in with Heber last night, and Money could not give me any tidings of you. Happily we had a majority of five—quite enough for the first stage in so "new and strange" a question; and there will be plenty of opportunities—one at least there will certainly be, on the second reading, for your "potent word."

I will endeavour to consult your convenience in fixing the day.

Shall I add your name to the Committee for preparing the Bill? I will, unless you forbid me before four o'clock. But now I must address myself to sleep again, for another hour or two, and so good by. Pray do not work yourself to death.

Ever sincerely and affectionately yours,

GEORGE CANNING.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A SON.

Ampton, Sunday, September 29, 1822.

My dearest —,

The event itself had been stated to us by Lord Calthorpe on our arrival yesterday evening, but without any other particulars. I have but very little time at my command to-day, compared with what I could gladly employ, and therefore I can use my pen even less than my weak eyes would allow me. But I must send back a few lines in return for your kind and affecting letter; and though, as you remark, you might be sure I should specially remember you all in my prayers this day, yet it is a pleasure to myself to assure you that I have been pouring them forth for you, and imploring that this striking visitation may produce on you the blessed effects, which I doubt not divine goodness designs that it should operate. We ought always on such occasions to be jealous of ourselves, bearing in mind the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and the consequent danger of our deriving no permanent benefit from emotions of which we at first conceive the effects will last for ever. Let us endeavour then to render the effect permanent, by some practical change. For instance; it would be an excellent one to commence, if you think there is any room for it, an improvement in the management of your private devotions. No one can here judge for another, because the right conduct may depend on bodily temperament, or on domestic circumstances; but if we have seen reason to believe that our private prayers have been at all hurried or discomposed, or their warmth or fervour damped by their being put off to too late an hour at night, or by our not having time enough in the morning, let us correct the defect at such a season, with earnest prayers for a blessing on it from Heaven. O, my dear —, all I have to say may be expressed in three words—be in earnest. I cannot but hope that a gracious God is guiding you, and He appears hitherto to have been drawing you by the cords of love. O may you yield to this soft compulsion! Compel not

your heavenly Father (if I may humbly presume to use such an expression,) compel Him not to use a harsher discipline. I think you must be sensible that your natural temper or habits dispose you to relish solitude less than is commonly desirable; but above all things, see to it that your private devotions are not stinted or damped. I wish you would read over, (why not with —?) Bickersteth's excellent treatise on prayer. Even at my age, I thought I received advantage from it—especially some of the parts in which he treats of the danger and evils of distraction in prayer, and of the best methods of guarding against them.

I have naturally been led into saying what I thought might be most useful to you, but you will anticipate, I doubt not, many of the reflections which this affecting incident enforces on my mind. I am suddenly told that I must immediately make up my letter, which I had understood was not to go till night. I can only therefore say once more, may God pour out His best blessings on you and yours; may He support poor — under this most heavy, and, except for the general uncertainty of life, most unexpected blow. For who that witnessed the extraordinary exertions which our departed friend was capable of making, and apparently without injury, could have supposed he would so soon break down. Never could it be more truly affirmed of any man than of him, that he died in the service—and in the service of a better Master than any which the world contains. How little could it have been expected, that of him and myself I should be the survivor! But I must break off. Once more then, farewell! May our heavenly Father bless you all.

I am,

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed: "Dear Stephen on anniversary of my dear sister's death.—
Most affectionate and pious.—A true picture of his mind.")

Missenden, October 18, 1822.

My dear Wilberforce,

Where time is inexhaustible, they have probably no measure for its course; and were it otherwise, the inhabitants of heaven would hardly mark their eras by the revolutions of our little globe. If they did, this would perhaps be a festive day with them, as the birthday of an illustrious spirit; for there are gradations of rank in heaven. One star differeth from another star in glory—and if love, humility, piety and patience, are paths to the peerage there, my dear ——'s patent was secure. Dignities on earth would have ill suited her taste; but superior rank in heaven, where there is no envy and no pride, will attract only superior love, attest superior excellence, and confer superior joy.

I should be a selfish creature, indeed, to remember the event, six years old, of to-day with a discontented or repining spirit. The common sentiment, "I would not call her back if I could," is far too cold for me. I would give one of my limbs, ay, my life itself if necessary, to rescue her from the miserable change. But you are no stranger to my feelings on this subject; you also partake of them. Yet so invincible are the prejudices arising from custom, or so embarrassing the consciousness of singularity, that even with you it is much easier for me to write, than to speak or act my true feelings on the recollection of my dear ——'s flight,

"An upward flight, if ever soul ascended;"

and experience has proved to me, that the day of commemorating her, whether the anniversary of her blessed change, or of her birth, or of our marriage, is most pleasantly and decorously, and satisfactorily, spent in solitude. To-day I have the comfort of spending it in our woods and commons, and in a day as bright as

midsummer. I grow daily more and more in love with this place. O what a delicious oratory is a beech wood in a calm hot day! Not a leaf stirring; not a sound; a sacred kind of shady light, with here and there a straggling sunbeam, like the gleam of providential direction in the dark concerns of life. I do not doubt that the druidical influence arose from the worship in woods. It must have been irresistibly imposing; it is plain, too, that the Gothic cathedral is an imitation of these solemn natural aisles. I really pity you at Marden Park: though fine enough in its way, it is not in the right way; besides, there you stand alone: all the ornaments are made for your single self; and then, they are *made*. And you have clumps on barren hills, instead of luxuriant hill tops and sides, and riant valleys, and sweet upland though smooth and level commons; and lovely cottages of the true peasant breed, and a village and church, and endless varieties of walks, &c. But do not suppose that I boast of these things merely to tantalize you. I live in hopes that you will now and then, ay, and not rarely, partake of them; for I know that they would be quite to your taste. In that view, I have the better reconciled my conscience to some enlargement of Healthy Hill cottage beyond my original plan, though the making room for my grandchildren was also an object.

I have so contrived my little cottage, with no small credit to my architectural talents, that it will hold not only you but your tail. Mind, however, I do not mean your political tail, nor your religious tail, nor even your African tail, either of which is twice as long as McGregor's; none of your hangers on, but your domestic tail merely. To entice you I have provided all the conveniences I think that you want, and among them a veranda across the front of the house, like your own at Kensington Gore, where you may have a walk of thirty-five feet, warm even at Christmas, for it has a south-west aspect, and is shut up by the body of the house and projecting wings from the wind, in every other quarter; in this respect it is superior to that of

Kensington Gore, the ends of which were uncovered. And then, the riant beautiful prospect before it! The air!—Here emphatic silence must assist me, till you behold and breathe it.

Now whether all this will attract you, I don't know; but if it will not, let me know; for there is a weighty question at present between my gardener here and me, which you may help me to decide, viz. whether I shall have a gravel walk or only a turf one, of 400 feet length or more in front of my paddock. The gravel is far off, and therefore will be costly; but then it would suit you best in moist weather; and I would defy the whole kingdom to produce a terrace with prospects equally various and beautiful.

You see, my dear W., I am not only building houses, but castles; and building them too in a land my dear — has forsaken. Yet can I truly say, that these things do not make me forget Stoke Newington churchyard, nor rival in my heart the prospects beyond it. I am rather jealous of being thought by strangers an old dotard, that is planning for his long continuance in a world from which he is likely to be soon called.

(Then (adds Mr. W.) he beautifully declares how much better is the portion he looks for, &c. &c. There were then private matters in another sheet, which he desired me to burn.)

RT. HON. G. CANNING TO WM. WILBERFORCE. ESQ.

Gloucester Lodge, October 24, 1822.

My dear Wilberforce,

I now send you the Portuguese note—I should rather say the note to the Governor of Portugal—upon the Brazilian slave trade, which after the declaration of independence by Brazil, Portugal has no right to carry on.

I expect every day an application from Brazil for the acknowledgment of that independence. Shall we be justified in making the Abolition of the slave trade by

Brazil a *sine quâ non* condition of any such acknowledgment? I incline to think so. But there are immense British interests engaged in the trade with Brazil, and we must proceed with caution and good heed; and take the commercial as well as moral feelings of the country with us. I say enough, however, to show you the leaning,—the strong bias of my opinion.

I have no objection to your communicating with those whom you mention, verbally, when you come to town. I confess I would rather that you did not correspond upon the matter at present, particularly as all my colleagues are away, and know less than you do. There is no hurry, as what remains to be done on different points must be done by us; and with Spain, or Brazil, or France alone, rather than at Verona.

Ever, my dear Wilberforce,

Most sincerely yours,

GEO. CANNING.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A DAUGHTER.

Elmdon House, near Coventry, December 5, 1822.

My dear —,

Though, from the questions I have heard buzzing around me for a few days of “Was not the 6th little W——’s birth day?” I suspect you would not remain without a congratulation on the anniversary of that event, which, through God’s blessing, raised me to the dignified station of a grandfather, were I to be silent; yet I cannot feel comfortable without assuring you of the thankfulness with which I look backward on being reminded by the recurrence of this day of such an addition to my domestic comforts, and look forward to the gradual developement of the bodily and mental faculties of this dear grandchild. The future is indeed uncertain as to the particular events which may take place, but not uncertain, blessed be God, as to their nature and colour, if we take due pains to improve the means of grace which the divine goodness has afforded

us; for we are assured that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. It may happen that this dear boy may hereafter in the senate watch over the matured growth of some institutions of which a certain grandfather, long ago laid in the grave, had superintended the tender and infant shoots; planting also in his turn some young saplings which his grandchild may hereafter behold in their full beauty of foliage and exuberance of fruit; or possibly, what I should much rather covet, he may hereafter enforce from the pulpit those blessed truths which both his paternal and maternal grandfather had inculcated in their day; and oh may it be added! which his own father and mother had so happily exemplified. You may remember that in China the stream of honour flows in the opposite direction to that which it takes in our European countries—I mean men ennoble backwards. They reflect their honour on their progenitors. Both modes have in them something of truth and nature; and while to be the child of a distinguished parent cannot but be a credit to any one, so, to be the parent of a distinguished child, every father's, and much more every mother's feelings will pronounce to be at once an honour and a delight; one of the greatest, as it is surely one of the purest, delights that our nature can enjoy in this world of sin and sorrow. This fund of pleasure, you must remember, is eminently in your keeping, and oh may God grant that it may have a gradual and an abundant increase! But I forget that I have letters to write to-day of a far less grateful kind, to correspondents with whom I have far less disposition to communicate; I must therefore say farewell. Give the dear little fellow an additional kiss in the name of his old grandfather, and believe me——, with constant prayers for your best interests, your truly affectionate

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO SIR T. D. ACLAND, BART.

The Temple, near Leicester, December 13, 1822.

My dear Sir T.,

Had not the complaint in my eyes been a continual hinderance to my writing, my want of leisure would not have prevented my long ago inquiring how you were going on. But the sentiments I had to pen to you could not properly be communicated through the medium of an amanuensis, my common resource. I therefore have remained silent. But you have often been in my mind, the more so in consequence of some desponding words which dropped from you one day towards the end of the session. I should have been very unfeeling if they had not affected me, and deeply too. And let me avail myself of my privilege, as having now passed my grand climacteric, to pour forth to you with freedom, I can truly call it friendly freedom, some of the reflections which you called forth.

Alas! my dear Sir Thomas, I can well understand the feelings of a warm-hearted man, who, entering into life sanguine and ardent, full of right aims and benevolent tendencies, compares some years after what he has actually effected with the hopes he had once indulged. And I can but too well conceive how natural it is for him in such circumstances to be ready to give up in despair all his previous projects, and to sit down in despondency, or retire to the frivolities of taste and fancy, till conscience rouses him into renewed efficiency. But besides that in such a humour a man greatly undervalues the worth of his actual performances, and you for instance the value of an independent course in the House of Commons of the member, *qualis sis*, of one of the first counties in England, we are all apt to forget that, after all, my dear friend, our chief business is at home. I need not apologize to you for speaking seriously—it would be worse than affectation—therefore (to pursue the train of thought I was entering on), though it is doubtless our duty, in the highest sense, to improve to the utmost of our power the opportunities of

doing good to others, which a gracious Providence has granted to us, yet our grand object, our ultimate end, should be to form in ourselves that character which is to fit us for a higher state of existence in a better world (I need not surely guard against being supposed to mean, that we are not all along to bear in mind that all our efficiency and success in this great work are to be derived from higher influences). Now this, blessed be God, is a cultivation which in one part of it or another may be carrying on continually, and will not depend on the result of our plans of usefulness to others. For instance, that very sickening feel, if I may so term it, with which you may be now disposed to contemplate your parliamentary efforts, may itself be moderating expectations that were too sanguine, may be loosening the hold which this world had upon you, and teaching you habitually to be looking above and beyond it, and may be enforcing on you the useful lesson not to expect much justice from man, but to accustom yourself to live under the constant sense of the divine presence, and with the continual desire of the divine favour. You, however, are still a young man, and only strengthen, or rather temper and put in order the various parts of your intellectual and moral machinery, and lay in also a copious assortment of raw materials of all sorts, and I doubt not but that, humanly speaking (I mean reasoning according to the ordinary probabilities of life), you, D. V., will live to work them up into many fabrics useful and esteemed amongst men. Meanwhile, do on the day the duties of the day, and consider how very few there are in this whole world, or what is more, ever have been, who have so much to be thankful for as yourself. That there are so many who value and love you I doubt not you account among the greatest subjects for gratitude. You see I am slyly preparing an additional motive for your receiving kindly the letter with which I am now troubling you, for I can assure you it is the unambiguous fruit of esteem and affection. That a gracious Providence may continue to shower on you its choicest blessings, rendering you a blessing to others,

and honoured and happy in yourself, is the cordial wish, and shall I not add prayer? of him who (begging his kind remembrances to Lady Acland and any others he knows within the circle, Barker for instance, or Marriott,) subscribes himself, my dear Sir Thomas,

Your sincere old friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

If you write to me, my best direction is always London.

I have neither time nor eyesight to read over what I have scribbled, if there are mistakes, *parce precor*.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO J. STEPHEN, ESQ.

December 27, 1822.

My dear Stephen,

If you lament your decayed faculties, and your present drowsihood, (as Thomson terms it,) how much more cause have I for such lamentations! I say it sincerely and seriously. Yet still what I can do I ought to do. But the complaint in my eyes is a sad hinderance to me in recovering lost ideas and facts. Now in filling my mind with them, and in warming and animating me, you would, I doubt not, do me great good. And I am one of those substances, like sealing-wax and other electric bodies, which require to be warmed in order to possess the faculty of attracting objects, of covering and clothing itself with them. I cannot sparkle at all without being rubbed, and this would be effected by your conversation and speechifying. Yet I perhaps can revive the old impressions by meditation and looking at papers. Formerly I had several friends who assisted me to look out for intelligence, Burgh, Dickson, and others. Pitt used to call them my "white negroes."

Farewell, my dear friend, olim hæc meminisse juvabit. I hope you do not shut yourself up the

whole day. Your mind cannot preserve its tone, if your body is unnerved and sluggish. May God, who has inspired you with the love of justice and mercy, and the abhorrence of oppression, prosper your labours for the promotion of the one and the suppression of the other.

With kind remembrances to your friendly circle, both in your own house and out of it, I am

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE LADY OLIVIA SPARROW.

Marden Park, Jan. 22, 1823.

My dear Friend,

I trust you give me credit for thinking of you much more frequently than I write. Such is the effect of the standing impediments to my being a good correspondent, arising from the complaint in my eyes, and from the necessary claims on them which must be admitted while I have any eyesight at all, that I seem to myself to fall into arrears with all my friends, and yet to be always writing up to the full of my powers. And while I can at all use my own pen, it is very disagreeable to write by an amanuensis; it is as bad as talking to a friend through an interpreter.

But do not abstain from writing in order to spare my eyes. The letters I receive from friends bear a less proportion to my whole number, than the salt I consume to the food it seasons; and the epistolary, I assure you, is far more grateful than the culinary seasoning. So believe me, your letters are even the more welcome when I am overdone by the multitude of less acceptable correspondents.

You kindly ask after my domestic circle. Of myself I thank God I can give a very good account in point of health, hitherto; just now I am not quite so well, but not I trust materially otherwise. But if you ask me how I have improved the long interval of uninterrupted

health which I have enjoyed since the beginning of our last recess, I am quite shocked at the answer I feel myself compelled to return. I know not how it is, I really have never meant to be idle, yet I can find no results from my occupation. I am now only beginning an undertaking which ought by this time to have been finished. It is a Manifesto on the present state of the negro slaves in our Trans-Atlantic colonies, calling on all good men (ay, and women too, so you are not to be left out) to concur with me in endeavouring to improve their condition, in order to fit them for the enjoyment of liberty. Really when I consider the heathenish state in which these poor creatures have been suffered to remain for two hundred years, wearing out their strength in a far more rigorous than Egyptian bondage to a Christian nation; pity, anger, indignation, shame, create quite a tumult in my breast, and I feel myself to be criminal for having remained silent so long, and not having sooner proclaimed the wrongs of the negro slaves, and the injustice and oppression of our countrymen. Not but that I unaffectedly feel for those who inherit property of this sort. And it is one of my many subjects for gratitude that this is not my situation. But I am glad to say that I really believe, if the masters will act reasonably, their loss need not be at all considerable, and they will possess their property by a secure, instead of as now, by a most precarious tenure. But let what I am about be a secret, I beg of you, till I tell you that there is no more cause for silence.

We have taken a house in St. James's Place, for the ensuing session. Shall you not be in town occasionally? Farewell, my dear friend. With best wishes and sincere prayers for your happiness here and hereafter,

I am ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE REV. HENRY VENN.

St. James's Place, Tuesday evening,
March 12, 1823.

My dear friend,

It strikes me, on reflection, that Doddridge's Eight Sermons on Regeneration, and Witherspoon's Essay on Regeneration, would be better for the friend we conferred about than any other publication that occurs to me. He seems to want a deeper sense of a work to be wrought on the human heart by the power of God, and to be wrought by Him alone, as the apostle ascribes that ardent desire of going to heaven, which is one of the effects of the indwelling Spirit, to the power and workmanship of God—"now He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God:" and by the way, consult Pole's Synopsis for a note on wrought, *κατεργασμένος*, *expolivit*.

Were he to have a just sense of the greatness of the change to be effected, and if he would study and consider the fair import of those passages, which speak of the union between Christ and believers, in St. John, vi. xv. (the vine), &c. and the xviith, the three or four verses following, "neither pray I for these alone," &c.; and if he would then compare these passages with St. Paul's prayers for his Christian disciples, in Eph. first and third chapters, and in Philipp. I. and Coloss. I., he would become sensible how much more there is than he has hitherto conceived in being a true Christian—and this leading him to detect the scantiness of his own attainments, and discovering to him the earnestness with which he has been applying his faculties to earthly interests and objects, and how little he has been duly endeavouring to obtain those large communications of the Holy Spirit, which, professing to believe the Scripture, he must admit that he might have obtained (for He is faithful that hath promised); all this, accompanied with earnest prayer, would lead to that deep remorse, that brokenness of heart, which would make him welcome the Saviour as his deliverer from the power no

less than from the punishment of sin, and look to Him for wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. Let him consider the addresses to the seven churches, and see how our Lord enforces on them the right affections of the heart—I have always found people more easily brought to see their sinful ingratitude to God and the Redeemer than any other fault—and then let our friend consider how (Rom. i.) God is represented as giving the Gentiles up to their own lusts, because they were not thankful for the comparatively trifling blessings they knew of.

May God bless you, my dear Sir, and your Christian efforts.

Get our friend to prayer, and all will be well. I understand that charming daughter, who lives with him, is truly pious. Let her pray for him too, and I am sanguine in hopes all will be well. I should like him to read the account of Dr. Bateman's conversion.

Farewell, and believe me ever,

With every good wish, my dear Sir,

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

HON. GEORGE CANNING, TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.*

(Private and most confidential.)

Gloucester Lodge, April 30, 1823.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have received your note, and in the same confidence in which it was written, I venture to say to you,

* When the conduct of ministers upon the French invasion of the Peninsula was the subject of angry censure, he was in the House, and took in great measure their part. "All history shows us," he concluded, "that wars are popular in their commencement and pernicious in their course. In my conscience I believe that the intentions of the government were fair and honest, and I applaud their pacific language, though I could wish they had assumed a higher moral tone."—*April 28*. The debate was twice adjourned, and as he did not wish to vote upon the question, he would have staid away on the succeeding nights, but an urgent note from Mr. Canning again brought him to the House for the conclusion of the matter.

(for yourself alone,) that you have not unduly estimated the difficulties of my situation.

But surely, surely in that case I have the stronger claim upon your justice. I am upon my trial to-day. Come and hear me! I had rather that you should "hear and vote," than that you should stay away, and leave your authority doubtful.

What you said about the tone of the papers is quite misunderstood. I understand it; but I know others do not. I must refer to what you said; and I had a thousand times rather do so in your presence. But, if you mean to be just, you will be there.

Ever sincerely yours,
GEO. CANNING.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

He thus conveys to one of his sons, who had left town reluctantly before a debate on the subject of West India Slavery, his judgment of its issue.

London, May 17, 1823.

My very dear —,

Now that the day is over, you will experience, if I may judge from my own feelings, no little pleasure from having practised a virtuous act of self-denial. You are rewarded also in another way; for the debate was by no means so interesting as we expected. Buxton's opening speech was not so good as his openings have been before. His reply however, though short, was, not sweet indeed, but excellent. I was myself placed in very embarrassing circumstances from having at once, and without consultation, to decide on Mr. Canning's offers. I thank God, I judged rightly that it would not be wise to press for more on that night. On the whole, we have done, I trust, good service, by getting Mr. Canning pledged to certain important reforms. I should speak of our gain in still stronger terms, but for Canning's chief friend being a West Indian—a very gen-

tlemanly and humane man, but by no means free from the prejudices of his caste.

I just recollect that this will reach you on a Sunday; allow me therefore to repeat my emphatical valediction, **REMEMBER.** You will be in my heart and prayers to-morrow, and probably we shall be celebrating about the same time the memorial of our blessed Lord's sufferings.

May God bless you, my beloved —. The anniversaries which have passed, remind me of the rapid flight of time. My course must be nearly run; though perhaps it may please God, who has hitherto caused goodness and mercy to follow me all my days, to allow me to see my dear sons entered upon the exercise of their several professions, if they are several. But how glad shall I be, if they all can conscientiously enter into the ministry, the most useful and honourable of all human employments! Farewell, my beloved —. I am ever

Most affectionately yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

London, July 14, 1823.

My dear Friend,

I am always overdone with business at the close of a session; and added to all my public occupations, we have been fixing; and bringing all my books, pamphlets, papers, &c. the accumulated stores of a whole life, into a habitation not previously fitted for receiving them. Marden Park was in one of the most beautiful countries eye ever beheld; but we were near three miles from church; we had no sheltered walk near the house, &c. And when people attain the grand climacteric, unless they be of antediluvian strength, they are compelled to make convenience the prime consideration in selecting a residence. Comforts become necessities.

You have doubtless heard of the prevailing *fashion* of resorting to the conventicle to hear Dr. Chalmers's late assistant, Mr. Irving. It is not merely the opposition members of both Houses, Lord Lansdown, Mackintosh, &c. that attend him; their political nonconformity might be supposed to endear to them his ecclesiastical dissent; but the orthodox Lord Liverpool, the vindicator of existing institutions Mr. Canning, press into his meeting-house; and even with tickets you must be at the door an hour before service commences, if you wish to get in without losing one of your coat pockets by mere mobbing. I have not yet been to hear him. Indeed I did not think it quite good example to adopt the prevailing rage. It is literally true (I was told by one who was present,) that an opera frequenter related as a part of the green room's conversation of the last Saturday night, "Shall you go to Irving's to-morrow?" It is with no little pleasure I have heard that he is a man not only of extraordinary powers, (though even once hearing him speak at one of our anniversary meetings satisfied me that he sadly needs the chastening hand of a sound classical education,) but of orthodox principles and personal piety, and I am assured too, of a fine, disinterested spirit. I thought that you would like to receive some certain intelligence of this extraordinary "performer," for such, with all his merits, he now appears.

May God preserve and bless you. So wishes, and so prays,

Your sincere Friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.*

My dear Friend,

For the peerless northern star, Irving, I allow that he is a man of talents,—but—but he is as bad a

* In answer to his letter of July 14, 1823.

writer as "ere my conversation coped withal." He writes like one of the old Covenanters in zeal, but oh, where is the clear but deep sense, the pellucid perspicuity of Baxter and of Howe? His censure of his brethren for confining their sermons to certain texts, and overlooking the rest of the Scriptures, and making the Bible a kind of party book, I was much pleased with. You will perhaps blame me for saying I shrink from many parts of the "Argument." That boldly prying into the awful mysteries of judgment over which the Bible has drawn such an impenetrable veil, I read with more pain than profit. I almost tremble at his familiar acquaintance with the details of the great Judge. It brought to my mind some lines, which I wrote in my copy-book at eight years old. I have never thought of them since. I know not who wrote them. Les voici—

"Query was made, What did Jehovah do
Before the world its first foundations knew?
The answer was, He made a hell for such
As were too curious, and would know too much."

You will think me severe, but I write as I feel.

I hope all your young ones are flourishing like the green bay tree. My best regards to all. Your eyes I am afraid will suffer from this interrupted and ill-written scrawl. As I was scribbling, the servant came up in a hurry to tell me that there was a coach at the door with eight Arabians. I was a little puzzled till these Arabs proved to be eight Moravians, no formidable race. These holy sisters made me a kind visit.

Adieu, my dear friend. Do not forget to commend me to God, and to the word of his grace.

Ever very truly and affectionately yours,

H. MORE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS AT
COLLEGE.

Yoxall Lodge, Nov. 30, 1823.

My dear ——,

I enclose you the halves of the bank notes ; the remaining halves shall follow. Always, I repeat it my dear ——, open your heart to me without reserve on this as on any other subject. There is a vile and base sentiment current among men of the world, that if you wish to preserve a friend, you must guard against having any pecuniary transactions with him ; but it is a caution altogether unworthy of a Christian bosom. It is bottomed on the supposed superior value of money to every other object, and in a very low estimate of human friendship. I hope I do not undervalue money, but I prize time at a far higher rate, and I have no fear that any money transactions can ever lessen the mutual confidence and affection which subsists between us.

As to dear ——'s approaching trial, I am much less anxious about the result than might be expected, considering my warm affection for him and the value I set on learning ; but I am satisfied because I am sure he has been employing his time well. There is often in the result of public examinations much of what we improperly call chance ; giving it that name because we cannot assign the facts to any known causes. But ——'s mind may be easy so far as I am concerned, though I certainly should rejoice in his success.

It is late, and my eyes give indication that it is time for me to stop ; so I will only say, may God bless you both. I am now in the house at which for many years I used to pass several weeks, sometimes months, in my bachelor state, and it affects me deeply to be now corresponding with four sons, one of them a husband and a father, and two of them at college. So life passes away. May you, my dearest ——, be ever aware of the rapid flight of time, and of the uncertainty of life, that whenever the summons shall be issued, you may be found ready. Farewell.

Ever your most affectionate Father,

W. WILBERFORCE.

RT. HON. G. CANNING TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Gloucester Lodge, January 4, 1824.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have communicated your letter of Friday to Lord Liverpool and to Robinson.

They are strongly of opinion that the setting apart a specific sum for the purpose of eventual compensation to the West Indians, and that sum one obviously inadequate (as it must be) to any thing like the amount of compensation, if any shall be found due, would have only the effect of committing parliament to the principle, without defining either the case in which it would be applicable, or the extent to which it would be to be applied.

The West Indians in their resolutions of last year recorded their admission that no promise had been made to them of compensation, though undoubtedly it had been thrown out in debate that if a case of positive pecuniary injury could be made out, the suffering ought to be borne by the community at large, not by any class of it. This, however, is a very different thing from buying ameliorations, and might be, and probably would be, executable in a different way from that of direct payment of money to individual planters.

If a shop for such payments is once opened, there will be no want of customers; for what West Indian now would not part with his estate at half or one fourth of its value?

Barham, you know, wanted us to buy all the West Indies.

Ever, my dear Wilberforce,

Very sincerely yours,

GEO. CANNING.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

Suffolk, Jan. 8, 1824.

My dear Friend,

The string you touched in your last truly kind letter has been vibrating ever since, and making music most delightful to a parent's mental ear; an organ not commonly noticed, but which is full as much in daily exercise as the mind's eye, of which we speak so familiarly. As I believe my dear son's greatest pleasure from his academical success has arisen out of that which he sees his mother and I have received from it, so my greatest gratification has been from the cordial congratulations of kind friends, and not one of them I can truly say has given me such sober certainty of waking bliss, as your letter and its enclosure.

I do not think I thanked you for your former highly entertaining letter, in which you manifested that your critical powers are in no degree "dulled." I had formed the same estimate of Irving's book; and I must say I never was more agreeably disappointed than by the two sermons I heard from him: and, by the way, let me state that I would not go when all the town was flocking around him, as they had done to Master Betty, or Mr. Kean, nor till I had been assured by a very sensible inhabitant of Glasgow, who had watched him there for three or four years, that he was a truly good man and active pastor, particularly attentive to the poor. I cannot conceive a more attentive audience than he had for a full hour and a half; and his language (free from all the affectation and bombast which his "Orations" and "Argument" exhibit) was remarkably and even felicitously forcible and impressive. I am not so self-conceited as to suppose that his knowing I was to be present, which he did, could dispose him to be more chaste and reasonable than in his printed discourses, but he might have learned from some of the critiques that had been published, that his style would not take. I own I think he cannot be a scholar; no classical taste could have borne his turgid affectation. But as you

truly say, it is faulty not merely in point of style. But I have expended on him much more of my little stock of eyesight than I meant; and I must not forget to tell you of the fresh proofs I have received during my summer's peregrinations, of the greatly improved state of society in this country since I came into life, and of the hopeful promises of future good, which this moral advancement holds out to us. Everywhere schools; and schools in which religious instruction is attended to—I met fresh traces, my dear friend, of the blessed effects of your writings.

As for John Bull, I can truly say that I am full as callous as I ought to be to the calumnies of party bitterness. The Barmouth story of my helping to set up an irregular church service, and forsaking that of the parish, was not only not conformable to truth, but opposite to it. But this justification must be to you superfluous. I am indignant, however, to hear that the vile falsehoods circulated against our dear, excellent Macaulay, have obtained credit in some circles in which one would have hoped there would been more of the spirit of English justice, if not of Christian charity, than to suffer people to give credence to unproved assertions to the discredit of a man who had preserved the good opinion for twenty-five years of a number of respectable friends, who had witnessed his conduct in domestic and social life. If any thing can make the people of this country submit to a censorship of the press, it will be this cannibal malignity in the devouring private characters. The false judgments of our character and conduct that are sometimes formed even by good men, often endear to me the idea of that blessed world where, at least, justice shall be done us, and where I trust many will embrace each other with mutual love, who are here scowling at each other, as Dr. Chalmers would say, with jealous defiance.

But I must lay down my pen, which I have used for some time almost without looking at it. Your eyes will be taxed I fear to spare my own.—Farewell, my dear friend, may Heaven's best blessings be abundantly poured forth on you. Lady Olivia Sparrow is here;

speaking of her son-in-law in very gratifying terms. Simeon just gone; better than usual. Here is a large house, collecting from all quarters. You are not forgotten by any of us. My dear wife and children, if they knew of my writing, would send the assurance of their respect and attachment.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS AT
COLLEGE.

My very dear —,

I trust I scarcely need assure you that you are much and often in the thoughts of all of us—indeed, it would indicate a want of common affection if the very circumstances of your present situation and the cause of your banishment were not to be continually bringing your image before us with emotions and associations of more than common tenderness, and so they do, my very dear boy, making you in idea, if not in person, a party to our daily rambles. I think I feel about you especially on a Sunday, when my mind always runs out more particularly on my dear children, and when you must yourself feel in a peculiar degree the want of domestic soothing. Yet I own I hope that on a Sunday you will endeavour to avoid company, and guard with the greatest care against whatever might tend to draw the mind and feelings downwards, and to clog them, if I may use Milton's language,

“With the rank vapour of this sin-worn mould.”

I must say that, on the ground of my own experience, I believe there is a special blessing vouchsafed to the keeping of that day devoted to spiritual purposes, including, of course, in them such methods of employing the mind and affections as may cultivate a spirit of love, compassion, beneficence, &c. towards our

fellow-creatures. Some of the happiest days of my life have been spent at inns where I have halted for the Sunday wherever I found myself on the Saturday night. I never shall forget one Sunday, in particular, when Babington and I were fellow-travellers in a tour through Wales. He speaks of it as well as myself with feelings of lively gratitude and tenderness. There cannot be a more proper season than the Sunday for endeavouring to cultivate a spirit of Christian peace and joy in believing. I have found it useful to keep by me on paper short memoranda of the chief mercies and blessings of my life, and likewise of the chief causes for humiliation and self-reproach. I am sure I need not suggest to you how the consideration of each serves to enhance and quicken the other. In truth, no one had ever perhaps so much (none more) cause as myself to adopt the Psalmist's declaration, a little altered, that "goodness and mercy have followed me all my days." And when I say this, I cannot but be forcibly impressed with the consciousness that one of my chief mercies has been the having such affectionate children.

A visit has been suggested to us which would bring us within an afternoon's ride of Oxford. In that case I trust you would spend a Sunday with us. I quite desiderate you, and shall still more when I arrive at home, than now when we are visiting different friends. We have been highly gratified by finding religion establishing itself more and more widely. I am sorry you cannot be here. I have just been over a lunatic asylum with above one hundred patients, a most striking scene. There was nothing to shock, no hurry, no apparent anxiety. I went round with the surgeon superintendent, and there was no unpleasant emotion in the face of a single individual on his accosting them. Farewell, my very dear —. May every blessing be your portion through time and in eternity!

Yours ever,
W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Master's Office, March 24, 1824.

My dear Wilberforce,

I cannot see you on Saturday, having been, unavoidably almost, drawn in to engage to meet Dr. Gaskin at Stoke Newington. I went there on Tuesday to visit the remains of my beloved and very excellent mother on the fiftieth anniversary of her birth-day into heaven; and was childish enough to scatter flowers on the tomb by way of jubilee, as I was to be followed in the visit by some others of her descendants that day. In some points I am more than half a Roman Catholic; and perhaps Dr. G. will think me a whole one. But really the recollection of my dear mother's saint-like and triumphant end, and the wonderful manner in which Providence has during fifty years answered her prayers for her children, has much by which even a Protestant may be edified. I revived the scenes half a century gone by with all the vivid freshness of yesterday's events: the sun was remarkably brilliant, as on that memorable morning, and reminded me forcibly of a feeling I have repeatedly had in such cases, viz. a sadness from his cheering beams. Well wrote Addison, "The daylight and the sun grow painful to me;" but it gave the reverse of sadness now, and I returned to my tread-mill with gayer spirits from my Stoke Newington walk. It was odd that I met there, in the morning, much against my purpose, three who knew me, comprising two, the only friends out of the family now living, that knew my dear mother. I called to leave a card at the old Doctor's door, having seen him last in great affliction for the loss of his wife, and thinking it right to ask for his health; but I was in a manner forced to go in, and there found those friends with him, to their great surprise and mine.

When I called on the sexton, a female one, to assist me in what I wished at the tomb, I found that my name would not do to direct her to it; and when I described

it she said, "Oh, sir, that tomb is Mr. Wilberforce's." I afterwards found the Doctor apparently of the same opinion; at least he was surprised when I brought to his recollection that a mother of my own had, fifty years ago, been laid in that spot, and given me the desire, as well as the customary right, to purchase and appropriate the ground I had since sunk a vault in.

I am neither mortified nor ill-pleased that you, my dear W., should cast me, living and dead, into the shade; and am quite content it should be said hereafter, not that you were laid in my vault, but I in yours, provided it does not happen from your going first.

With love to Mrs. W.

Ever very affectionately yours,
J. S.

J. S. HARFORD, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bangor, October 18, 1824.

My dear Friend,

At Milford, as we were on the point of embarking for Ireland, I was greeted by your most interesting and welcome letter. The animation which it breathed, and the firmness of the writing, confirmed the delightful assurance which it gave me, that you were restored to your ordinary standard of health; and oh! may it please God to vouchsafe you a long freedom from the painful attacks which have lately caused your friends so much anxiety. You were most kind in not deeming my suggestions about the expediency of allowing yourself a few years of comparative respite from public life troublesome. I well know that your vigorous mind reasons on the principle of

"Nil actum reputans dum quid superesset agendum."

But two such severe illnesses as you have endured within a few months painfully demonstrate that the body is not

equal to the demands of the mind, but calls for relaxation from over-anxiety, and oppressive care. One thing, at least, I trust you will be prevailed upon to determine, and that is very much to narrow the sphere of your labours, and not allow worthy but inconsiderate men to force too much work upon you.

We paid a most interesting visit at Belle-vue. Twelve years had elapsed since our former visit; but so deep was the impression made both on Louisa and me by the kindness we then experienced, that we flew to meet every member of the family as old friends, and as united to us by the bond of Christian affection; and we met, on their side, with corresponding feelings. Dear amiable Mr. Latouche bends beneath the weight of ninety-one years; but, considering his great age, he is a wonderful man, being in full possession of his faculties, and replete with attention to all around him. There is in his demeanour a benignity, a meekness, and a courtesy which attract to him in return inexpressible tenderness and respect. He was generally the first at prayers in the chapel every morning. Of the chapel at Belle-vue you have doubtless heard. It is connected with the house by a long glazed walk planted on each side with exotics and flowering plants. It is built on a very elegant design, and is well adapted to its object. The girls of Mrs. Latouche's school, which is in the park, attend the chapel regularly, and open the service by singing a psalm or hymn; and being carefully instructed for this purpose, their singing is truly beautiful, and imparts a peculiar interest to the family devotion. Mrs. Latouche is the very image of benevolence—she is ready at all times to make any sacrifice of time or attention for the good of her fellow-creatures. Her exertions in this way are unwearied. The poor in the neighbourhood have had reason to bless Belle-vue and its inmates for the last twenty years. But Mrs. L. is not merely kind and charitable, she is so with discrimination: every thing is done in a large and liberal way; but the spirit of order and system animates the whole machinery of her house-

hold. Mr. Latouche gives employment, in the house and out of it, to upwards of eighty persons.

Miss —, their niece, and, I might add, their adopted daughter, is a very interesting person, and a great blessing to them: when I was last here she was a little girl. Great pains have been taken with her education, and the result has been most successful. Religion has taken deep root in her heart, and she is highly accomplished.

I spent many delightful hours in Mr. Knox's room. His mind is as exuberant of bright ideas, and as active as ever. I call him the Plato of the house. He really is a man of a highly sublimated intellect, and piety is the element of his being. I could not agree with him in all his opinions; but he has much advanced in liberal and kind feelings towards those who differ from him; and when he vouchsafes to be simple, and to explain himself accurately, he makes near approaches in his views of the doctrines of grace to ourselves. His sentiments upon internal religion, and on the happiness to be tasted in a devout life, are worthy of the character I have assigned him, of the Christian Plato. He declines talking in the general circle upon the Roman Catholic question; and his views respecting it are thus far modified, that, though retaining all his former opinions, and believing that every new concession would be attended with happy consequences, he fears the time is past at which they would prove beneficial in the degree he once anticipated.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Most private and confidential.)

October 19, 1824.

My dear Wilberforce,

You have heard from me in general that I have long been a disappointed applicant to the Lord Chancellor for certain official reforms which I deem indispensably necessary, to secure not only an impartial distribution of

references among the Masters, but in connection with it, what is far more important, purity and impartiality in the discharge of the very delicate and momentous public duties of the Masters and their clerks. Three or four years have elapsed since these reforms were promised by his Lordship. I had on the last of my conferences with him an express renewal of this promise, and of its being carried into effect, as I understood him, before he closed his sittings for the present vacation; but he might possibly mean that it should be before the commencement of the next Chancery term, which is now at hand, the First Seal being fixed for November 1st. May I not again be disappointed! If I am, it will become my painful duty to state the case to the Chancery Commissioners very soon after they renew their sittings, and to seek a remedy from them; or, through their report, from higher authority. But I may possibly fail even in that resort. There is another, which, in that case, I should perhaps feel myself bound in conscience to try; viz. an application to the House of Commons, unless the Commissioners in an early report should disclose the full merits of the case, without recommending the specific remedy proposed by me; in which case it will be enough for my justification that the case is made known to Parliament.

But there is another possible event: I may be called to give an account of my stewardship before either termination of this business; and I feel it at length a duty to make some insurance against the possible consequence of such an event, the final failure of the proposed reform, from the non-discovery to the Commissioners and to Parliament of all the facts of the case, and especially some of a delicate kind that rest in my own knowledge. To prevent this, I now make it my request to you, that if I should die before that reform is effected, you will take proper measures for bringing either before the Commissioners or before Parliament, whichever you deem most proper, or before them in the first instance, and Parliament, if necessary, afterwards, the information to which I allude.

Such part of it as is of a public nature, or not entirely

private, is already reduced into writing; and a copy of it, sealed up and addressed to you, will be found among my papers designed for posthumous use, as will a statement of those private facts within my own knowledge, of which I have yet to make a record for this purpose.

To make the compliance with this request at once easier to your own feelings, and more influential with others in its effect, you have my permission, and even my request, that it may be done expressly in discharge of a duty of friendship, which I, in contemplation of death, imposed on you for the ease of my own conscience; and I think it will be better if you will enable yourself to add, that you at my request had bound yourself by promise to do so.

You may, however, if the case arises, and Lord Eldon is still Chancellor, put it in his Lordship's power, if you think fit, to relieve you from that duty, by making, without delay, that remedial Order of Court which he stood pledged for to me in my lifetime.

I am, my dear Wilberforce,

Ever very affectionately yours,

JAMES STEPHEN.

P. S. Pray seal this up, and write on the cover, "To be delivered, unopened, to Mr. Stephen, if he survives me."

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

(Private and confidential.)

Bath, October 20, 1824.

My dear Stephen,

I willingly promise compliance with the request contained in your letter just received of the 19th inst., in the very improbable event of my surviving you; and, in truth, I make the engagement the more cheerfully, because, should I be living and you withdrawn from this world, before the abuses in the Office of Masters in

Chancery are amended, I should feel it due to your character, and therefore an obligation of friendship, to make it known, 1st, That you had been using your utmost endeavours to have the abuses corrected, so as to secure to the public the benefit without obtaining any credit for yourself; and, 2dly, That you did not allow yourself to profit from the official abuses while they did continue. It is not merely for the sake of your own reputation that I shall wish this truth to be made known, but because they who profess to act from religious principles are not always sufficiently exact in discharging beyond others (for our Saviour's question to his disciples was, "What do you more than others?") the moral and political duties of life.

I have sealed up your letter, and written on it, to be delivered to you, in the event of my death, unopened. Farewell.

Ever affectionately yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. H. MORE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, Christmas Day.

My dear Friend,

May you have all the consolations, and blessings of this auspicious season!

Although somewhat improved in health, (not so in sleep,) since I had the great delight of seeing you and dear Mrs. W., yet as the continued inflammation in my hand still prevents me from holding a pen, I am obliged to write with that of my friend Miss Frowd. And first of all, I must thank Mrs. Wilberforce for her very kind letter: I am glad it has been in my power to afford her so much pleasure, by the surrender of my treasure.*

Forgive me, my dearest friend, if I press upon you a subject very near my heart, which is to entreat you to consider the unspeakable importance of your own health

* A print of Mr. Wilberforce, which Mrs. W. desired might be bequeathed to her.

and life to your family, your country, and to religion, and therefore to spare yourself as much as possible the fatigue and danger of applying too much to public and political concerns.

But there is a subject (if possible) of a still more interesting, as well as a more durable, nature—I mean the ardent wish, which I in common with all your friends have long indulged, that you should devote all your leisure hours to the preparing a memoir of your own life and times. This, done as you would do it, would be a treasure of inestimable value, not only to your own children and contemporaries, but to posterity. It is no compliment to say, that few persons, if any, have been so distinguished as yourself both in the political and religious world—a union very rare, and almost new.

When I planted the barren hill above my house, which I did twenty-four years ago, and partly with my own hands, I was too much delighted with the employment, and compared myself with Jeroboam, who worshipped in groves and in high places—I now complete the resemblance, for, like Jeroboam, I have a withered hand.

My kind love to Mrs. Wilberforce and all the domestic party, particularly my dear god-daughter. It is a comfort to you, that you will only have to hear this letter read, and not to answer it—as it requires none.

Forget not to pray for

Your faithful and affectionate Friend,
(the sign of) HANNAH MORE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

Elmdon House, September 17, 1825.

My dearest —,

There are many friends, or rather acquaintances, to whom I should naturally introduce you, if I were myself at York, but to whom I could scarcely give you letters, circumstanced as you and they are at the present meeting. I do not think I ever talked about this same

musical festival, but I assure you I could not help feeling a certain longing to be present. Never was I more affected by music than even by the common service in the Minster. But I did not think I ought to incur the expense for such a gratification: so many enjoyments and comforts are profusely poured on me, that I may well be satisfied without paying so dear for an additional pleasure, though I own I think music and the taste for it are given to us for the very purpose of exciting the devotional feelings; and I always regret that in such performances as the Messiah, the attendant circumstances are so sadly calculated to damp and dissipate those spiritual affections, which the music of itself is fitted to call forth. How, beyond measure more, I have always thought should I enjoy it, if I were in a situation in which I could hear it all without being seen, or being obliged to chat, and express my admiration of this song, or of that chorus. But when music is performed in a cathedral, we should endeavour to compose the mind, to recollect ourselves, and strive to fancy we are listening to the sound

“ Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tune
 Angelic harmonies, the empyrean
 Ringing with hallelujahs.”

I was called away yesterday, before I had finished my letter, and I have resumed my pen to-day (Sunday), and therefore I must make the remainder of my letter suitable to the day. And I know not how I can do it better, than by mentioning to you, what I intended saying before we parted, but neglected—I mean that, on reflection, I was not satisfied with the general strain of our conversation on the Sunday, when we were all together. And as my dear children, to do them justice, are apt to take the tone from me, I fear I have been chiefly in fault. May the Lord forgive me! I am persuaded we should make it a chief part of our Sunday's occupation to cultivate a spiritual frame of mind, to confirm and strengthen our sense of the reality of in-

visible things. It is a great acquirement to be able to realize the unseen world; more especially before we engage in prayer we should endeavour to feel ourselves in the presence of our God and Saviour. I find my striving to do this especially effectual in producing a sense both of contrition and of awe, and of gratitude and confiding hope. And here let me remark, that I am persuaded, we are all sadly wanting to ourselves in not striving more to obtain spiritual joy. Oh we do not live up to our Christian state and privileges. If we examine the Acts of the Apostles and St. Paul's Epistles, we shall find how much Christian joy is spoken of as belonging naturally to real Christians. My very dear —, do you strive, I beseech you, after this blessed affection, and be assured you may obtain it, if you duly strive. But my eyes are tired—I must go to prayer, where my dear — will occupy a special place in my heart. Oh may my very dear son be carried safely through the ordeal through which he is now passing, and may he exhibit the life and character, and enjoy the hope and peace and joy of a Christian. I should never have done, if I were to go on till I had exhausted all the affectionate emotions which press for expression: I will absolutely close, begging you to present my kind remembrances, and the assurance of my best wishes for the health and happiness of Sir Charles and his family, and entreating you to keep me in your heart, as your most affectionate father,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Beckenham, February 8, 1826.

My dear Friend,

Io triumphe! or rather let us praise God who thus appears at last to bless our progress. I am strongly reminded of the remark of that kind, related I think by Clarendon, that it really seems our own fault that the popular voice was not before clamorous in our favour.

But no—"There is a tide in the affairs of men," &c. &c.; and let us now, while it is thus favourable, push on with becoming zeal and diligence. If all were to be about half as industrious as you, (I speak literally, for in common parlance I should say a twentieth part,) we really should make a greater advance in this very session than I had ventured to anticipate. I should not be honest were I not to confess that I am conscious of a longing to have a share in the *mêlée*, but, I dare say, it is better as it is. No man has more cause than myself (few so much) to say, "Goodness and mercy have followed me all my days." I hope, and, indeed, from what Lushington said to me on the day of the meeting, I doubt not, he will make good his case in the affair of Lecesne and D'Escoffery, and I am the more prepared for this issue by the account of his speech of last year, which, I presume, by your kind order, was lately sent to me; otherwise I was a little uneasy, from having found that the printed parliamentary papers had produced an impression unfavourable to the poor fellows in the mind of a very worthy and pious friend into whose hands I had put the papers.

But I am doing very wrong in thus wasting your time and my own eyesight, for which, alas! I have far more demands than I can satisfy; I must, however, express the great pleasure it gives me to find Mr. Smith's benevolent and honest mind and sound understanding borne away in the right direction. As to the Ladies' Society, I own I feel considerably uncomfortable about it, and, by the way, Babington thinks of it much as I do. Nevertheless, as it might appear strange if Mrs. W.'s name were not included, she consents to your putting it down, remembering that she resides in the country, and therefore cannot be expected to attend meetings. It is to the political character of the subject that my repugnance chiefly applies; to their mixing in stirring up petitions otherwise than by private discourse and *hoc genus omne*. There is not the same necessity for my daughter's name, and therefore I don't like to press her to give it. But they are come for my letter,

and it will be too late for the post if not made up immediately; so farewell, and thank you again for all your kindness.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ.
(now LORD BROUGHAM).

Kensington Gore, March 28, 1826.

My dear Sir,

I am persuaded that the deep interest you take in the success of our great cause would of itself render unnecessary any apology for my stating to you, frankly, the apprehensions I cannot but entertain of the effect of what has lately passed in the House of Commons relative to it. It is not, I assure you with perfect sincerity, that I do not consider your judgment superior to my own, but sometimes a bystander is better qualified to take a just view of the state of the case than those who are actually playing the game. If my surmise is well grounded, it is to your consideration without doubt that I ought to submit it. I am glad, knowing the value of your time, that my trespass on it need not be long.

The sum of my fears is this: that a sufficiently clear and strong protest has not been made against the course which Mr. Canning still pursues, of trusting that the colonial assemblies may at length be brought to co-operate cordially in our views and measures for ameliorating the condition, with a view to the ultimate emancipation, of the slaves. It is not, doubtless, that I do not think with you that if the masters would really co-operate with us in good earnest, the practical execution of our design need but be left to the masters themselves; but when we consider that, with scarcely perhaps a single exception, they all consider emancipation as only another term for ruin, how can we possibly expect, with any colour of reason, that they will cordially co-operate with us in giving effect to measures which we frankly

avow to have emancipation for their end? I confess I have long thought, and indeed have often declared, that this is the point on which, practically speaking, the whole business turns; and I am the more uneasy now, because some hints that have dropped from different parties have suggested to my mind the probability that the planters, instead of persevering in their present absolute resistance to our measures, will assent to some of them in words, but with the real intention of evading the execution of them. They whose acquaintance with this whole subject is, in common parlance, but of yesterday, can scarcely have an adequate idea of the degree of hostility to all our plans which is generally felt in the West Indies. But you who, though not quite such a veteran as myself, have yet been so long conversant with the subject as to be familiar with all the proceedings respecting it that have taken place in Parliament within the last thirty years must, I am persuaded, think as I do on this important point. More especially a strong argument in confirmation of our views is afforded by the result of Mr. C. Ellis's address in 1796-1797. The address, you will remember, passed the House of Commons unanimously, though by us hopelessly, and in secret, growlingly. It was backed by the unanimous support of the whole West India body in this country, and was transmitted to the several governors by the Duke of Portland, a known partisan of their own, and was enforced on them by a private letter from Sir William Young, intimating the strong apprehensions entertained by the most discerning friends of their cause, that unless they should conciliate the House of Commons by some amelioration of measures, several of which were suggested, the law for abolishing the slave trade would infallibly pass. Yet not a single colony adopted a single tittle of Mr. C. Ellis's proposals. Can any one then believe that they who would not adopt any of those measures at the instance of their friends, when they were thereby to obtain what they conceived to be the greatest benefit, will now adopt them to please their enemies, to

insure what they all regard as synonymous with certain destruction?

I have been insensibly led into wasting your time and my own by urging these arguments. But even disinterested men in general, though for the most part wishing well to our cause, are not sufficiently aware that the whole really turns on our taking it upon ourselves to insure the execution of the ameliorating measures, and our not leaving the office to the colonial assemblies. The complaint in my eyes, which prevents my reading the newspapers, keeps me very imperfectly acquainted with their imperfect reports. Perhaps it may be owing, in some degree, to this cause, that I fear we appear to have acquiesced too much in Mr. Canning's plan of proceeding; and I cannot but feel the deepest anxiety that, when Parliament reassembles, you should ascertain whether or not there is any ground for my alarm, and if there be, that you would make such a plain declaration of your opinions as will draw on our other friends to do the same. We never again shall have so favourable a juncture; the public feeling in our favour being now at its height, and the House of Commons looking forward to a speedy appearance before its constituents.

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Bath, May 11, 1826.

My dear Friend,

Of all places actual, I had almost said of all places possible, Bath is the worst for me; considered as to the power it affords me of corresponding with my absent friends. But I will reserve till we meet the explanation of this position, only reminding you of the complaint in my eyes, and of the peculiarity attending it, that it is much the worst for the first five or six hours after my rising in the morning; so that I cannot use my pen at all till the inundation of visiters has broken in,

or if a rainy day should lessen it, till the duty of drinking the water, and taking a requisite measure of exercise during and after it, calls me to the pump-room. But for these and other insuperable hinderances, you would have heard from me much sooner, the rather because I have experienced even in you, (to be honest, and to treat you with the frankness of friendship, when I am sure I feel its warmth,) that let those from whom I may wish to receive letters know ever so well the cause of their not hearing from me, yet they will never do more than give me letter for letter, and sometimes (and even here you I fear cannot plead Not guilty) they will even provokingly apologize for the length of their letters, when they do write, or assign the weakness of my eyes as the cause of their not having written sooner. The expenditure of eyesight in reading a single letter, especially one of yours, (since you no more incur that peccadillo criminality by writing than by speaking, which I have heard you justly charge on some of our friends, of speaking in so low a voice as to be almost inaudible,) is so trifling compared with the pleasure I receive from the perusal, that *la jeu vaut bien la chandelle*.

Thursday evening. Thus far I had proceeded, when I was forced to lay down my pen and proceed to the pump-room, and thence to the ordinary drudgery of visiting and card leaving, followed to-day however by a walk on the top of Lansdown, whence the gorgeous display of rural beauties on the first bursting out of all the varieties of spring vegetation is truly magnificent. I have since, however, had my eyes regaled with an object that has given me still more pleasure. Though it is really curious that, at the very time when I was charging you in my last page with having sometimes provoked me by assigning kind consideration for my eyes or time as the cause of your silence, and more in the same spirit, you were renewing the offence, for you begin your letter by congratulating me in some sort for having escaped for weeks the receipt of a letter from you. But, my dear friend, most sincerely do I congratulate you on being enabled still to go on with unabated

alacrity as well as vigour, in supplying the wants of your own populous circle, while through the world at large you are continually diffusing fresh light and heat. I remember having always been delighted by a passage in Johnson's preface to Shakspeare, in which he defends the tragi-comedies of Shakspeare. I can truly say my feeling for the poor Shipham people is not less deep because I could not help laughing outright (ay, and repeatedly too,) at the pigs' meat in the close of your letter. Indeed it cheered Mrs. W. with a hearty laugh. But I must lay down my pen in a few minutes; let me therefore immediately execute the purpose for which I originally took it up, to inquire whether it would suit you better to see us in about twelve days, or in about three weeks, or a few days less. I should like to be at least one entire day under your roof, if it would not put you to inconvenience; but be honest with me, and be assured I never can misconstrue you, or doubt your kindness. Now for your poor neighbours—I really feel it kind in you to apply to me. You have not allowed me for several years to contribute any part of my quota, for such it ought to be accounted, and I consider myself your debtor to that amount. I wish I could make the note for 10*l*. that I enclose one for 100*l*., but my four sons press heavy on me. You ask about Ogilvie's letter: few communications ever gave me half so much pleasure: I have carried it about with me ever since I received it from you, and now have it in my writing-box. I hear continually, blessed be God, of the good done by your last publication. There was light and heat in the dispersed effluxes (if I may so term them), but, brought together and concentrated, the effect seems increased beyond all expectation.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Brampton, July 27, 1826.

My dear Friend,

Lord C. and I read over No. 14 of the Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter, and were both of us pleased with it; indeed there are some parts of which we highly approve: such, for instance, as the appeal to Mr. Canning for the different way in which the petitions would have been described, had they been in favour of Catholic emancipation. But there are some particulars in which we concur in wishing for alterations. Lord C. disrelishes the boasting of such numerous petitions, but I believe on the whole, that it was right to mention them, and to vindicate them from the charges that had been falsely urged against them. We both, however, think that it would be better not to speak of the ladies' Anti-Slavery Associations for discouraging the use of slave-grown sugar.

Again, we think, and from a knowledge of Mr. Canning's character I cannot but believe the consideration of great importance, that more use should be made of the shameful misrepresentation which Mr. C. was unconsciously led into making to the House of Commons. Generally speaking, no man is more accurate in his facts, no man takes more pains to insure accuracy. What confidence can Mr. C. justly place in future in official men who could so grossly mislead him, and render him the instrument of misleading the House of Commons. It is difficult to suppose that any one who had examined the official papers could unintentionally fall into such gross errors. In short, this occasion should be used for the purpose of leading Mr. Canning to distrust the source whence he derived that information.

My eyes having been very indifferent, I dictated the above, but let me use my own pen in assuring you that I am duly sensible of the unfairness of pressing so heavily on you. Yet you are the only efficient member of our body who possesses at once the requisite knowledge and ability for refuting the sophistries and contradicting

the misstatements of our adversaries. I might hope to do something but for the want of eyes, though I must say I am sadly forgetful now, especially of recent incidents; and what is more, I cannot make the same use of passages I notice in books that are read to me as if I had read them with my own eyes, and could know them at a glance.

I have met with Cymrie Williams's book here. It is manifestly, *à façon de parler*, a tour written in England. Farewell.

Ever affectionately yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS MARY BIRD.

Hampstead, August 26, 1826.

My dear M.,

Your nephew's death is indeed a most affecting incident. Your letter reached me only four or five days ago, and conveyed to me the first tidings of it. It is exactly of the same class as that of Sir Stamford Raffles, who had scarcely cast anchor for life in a quiet and most commodious harbour, after having been all his days experiencing the dangers of shipwreck, of pestilence, of fire, &c. &c., than his poor wife's not unreasonable hope of enjoying with him a tranquil calm during the evening of life (the calm sweetened by the former buffetings) was dashed to the ground, and, when better than usual, all at once he receives his summons into eternity. I heard with extreme pleasure that papers of his writing were found that indicated a consciousness that he might be thus suddenly called away.

I had poor R.'s letter read over to me again after I heard of his death. How affecting it is to think of our officers not attending the ordinances of religion, or rather not having the means of attending if they would, for fourteen years together. Yet his letter shows the benefit of early religious instruction. Instead of casting off respect for Christianity, he retains his early

belief of its divine authority; and though late, "comes to himself," and reads the Scriptures. May God have had mercy on him! He is merciful and gracious, and kindly considers our disadvantages. . . . I scarcely need tell you that I am scribbling away as fast as possible, that I may spend the less eyesight in proportion to what shall be written. But it is an assurance deliberately formed, I assure you, however hastily put on paper, that though you have lost one of your natural friends, and lost him under the most affecting circumstances, yet that you still have in myself one of the friends of your youth, who doubts not that the cordial esteem and regard he has long entertained for you will cease only with his life. Neither of us, however, can look forward to a long continuance of our term in this world. Indeed, when it is considered that near forty years ago the great Dr. Warren declared, that my want of stamina was such that I could scarcely last a fortnight, it is wonderful that I should have completed my sixty-seventh year. May I be enabled to employ the remainder of life more to the glory of God than the last few years of it!

Farewell, my dear M. May our heavenly Father support and cheer you, and may we at length meet in that better world in which sin and sorrow will be no more!

Ever your sincere and affectionate friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

Private. Just let me add, that I trust you are comfortably provided as to pecuniary circumstances; and that you remember, if there should be need for it, that I am your natural resort, as your near relative and like-minded friend.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

Feb. 19, 1827.

My very dear —,

It quite cheers me to hear that we are likely to see you so soon; though in all such cases I rejoice with trembling. Mr. Leslie Forster, M. P. for Louth county, who has been staying here, was at Fife House by appointment on Saturday, when a servant came into the room where he was waiting, and told him that Lord Liverpool could not be seen that day. The newspapers will probably state that having been remarkably well, he was suddenly seized by apoplexy or palsy, (found on the floor, his countenance convulsed, and he insensible,) so that his political life must be at an end. I fear Canning also is more seriously indisposed than I had hoped. It always affects me deeply, when either from advancing years, or sudden illness, this world appears to be slipping out of the grasp of an éminent public man, who (we have reason to fear) has been making too little preparation for his entrance into another. Lord Liverpool, I trust, had serious thoughts. I well remember the former Lady Liverpool's telling me at the Pavilion, many years ago, that she and Lord Liverpool used to contend, each for the favourite of each, Pascal or Fenelon; and Pascal is an author who has many "pregnant propositions," as Lord Bacon calls them.—I must stop.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE REV. LEWIS WAY.

Elmdon House, near Solihull, Warwickshire,
May 31, 1827.

My dear Friend,

Again, and again, and again, I have been thinking of writing to you, but a complaint in my eyes, that has become habitual, and which allows me to use my

pen but very little compared with the many claims on it, and to read still less, is a standing hinderance, and, except when I have some necessary call to address a friend, a sense of duty prompts me to abstain from so doing. When I have any business to transact with him, my amanuensis is at hand, but a mere reciprocation of affection, as the learned Doctor would have termed it, shrinks from the formality of dictation. But when my dear S., who is on the point of visiting Paris on his way into Switzerland, asked me if, besides commissioning him to give you assurances of my warm affection, I would not make him the bearer of a letter also, I could not say, No. O how I wish I were accompanying him.

My dear friend, I hear with unfeigned and great pleasure that you are receiving continual proofs that it is Providence that has shaped your course to Paris and detained you there. It is manifest to any reflecting mind, that in your person and circumstances there are coincidences that can scarcely be ever expected to unite, and all tending to render you peculiarly fitted to be useful in your present situation. Your being a gentleman, a man of fortune, and even your genius, and —— but I will not particularize, that I may not seem to flatter, and therefore I will only say, your *tout ensemble*, appears to manifest to any of your friends, who must naturally disrelish the idea of your abstraction from your native country, that were the *dramatis personæ* to be cast for a set of performers, Lewis Way would by acclamation be appointed to the post assigned to him. I have but one doubt, of which you must be a better judge than I am, for I can speak only on general grounds, and I only name it that I may be honest, and not leave you ignorant of an apprehension which suggests itself to my mind—it is, whether the place and its inhabitants are likely to be such as you would wish for your children. And on this I am sure you will both reflect yourself, and request the counsel of any Christian friend who is qualified to be of your cabinet on such an occasion. For it is not every good man that would be quite competent to such an office. This is all whispered into your private

ear in the full confidence of friendship. And now, my dear friend, my eyes admonish me to lay down my pen, and I must obey. Let me first, however, beg you to present assurances of my affectionate regard to Mrs. Way and Co. May you be blessed, if it be the will of God, with a long course of usefulness and comfort, to be followed by a still better portion in a better world! Such is the cordial wish, and, D. V., shall be the prayer of,

My dear Way,
Your sincere and affectionate friend,
W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. Pray be kind to dear S., and his fellow-traveller Mr. Anderson also, the eldest son of the old baronet of the name. Only talk to S. in French.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HENRY BANKES, ESQ.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, November 19, 1827.

My dear Bankes,

I thought I should have welcomed any incident that gave me an occasion for writing to you. But the newspaper has just now informed me of poor Tomline's death *chez vous*. I had lately heard from common rumour that he had been attacked by some dangerous disease, but the same account stated that his life was in no present danger, though there might be reason to fear for his intellect. There has been scarcely any intercourse between the bishop and myself for many years, though when we met we conversed with our old familiarity. But to you confidentially I will own that I never could forgive his never proposing prayer to our poor friend Pitt (how much forgotten in a few short years) till within about six hours before his dissolution: and I cannot but fear the effect of the bishop's language and conduct towards him was to suggest the persuasion that he (the bishop) was not dissatisfied with his state in the most important of all relations—a persuasion fairly to be

gathered from the dedication of the bishop's book on Christian Theology (I mean the two volumes of Elements published in 1798). Still I cannot hear without emotion of the death of a man with whom we associated on such friendly terms in early life, and who never did any thing to offend me personally, though his general goings on were such as to give me real concern. I know not a man in England of whose attaining to an extreme old age one might be so justly confident, and the account of his illness and now of his decease coming on me so suddenly, I am naturally the more struck with it. Had he been long ill? Had he his faculties during his illness? I presume from his dying under your roof, the distance from Farnham not being great, that he had not recovered from his first seizure. But to a less painful topic. I hope you are yourself as well as when I saw you last, and I quite rejoice to know that your disease is not of a more dangerous nature, or of one that produces more suffering. I am the more sensible on this head, from what has lately happened to a very old and highly-valued friend of mine.

I know not whether you may remember that in March last you suggested (what I own surprised me) Robinson's appointment to the premiership. What an unexpected *dramatis personæ* have we now on the stage! I hope Lord Eldon enjoys his liberty: he has worked so very hard, that though not fresh from the harness the feelings of Virgil's horse may very naturally be his own. I meant to tell you about my own tour, strange to say the first tour of pleasure I had taken in Yorkshire almost in my life, certainly for thirty years, but to save the post I must break off. Tell me how you are yourself, and as much else as you will, both personally and *de republicâ*. If any of the family are with you, I beg my best remembrances, and I am ever, my dear Bankes,

Very sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ———.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, November 28, 1827.

My dear Sir,

I am unaffectedly sorry for having subjected you to the obligation of using your pen when, from the state of your health, you could not write without suffering.

I am now conscious that I suffered myself too easily to presume that you must be sufficiently acquainted with the case of Mr. Macaulay. Let me begin by assuring you, from an intimate knowledge of Mr. Macaulay of between thirty and forty years, that he is a man of very superior talents, and both as a public and private man of no less worth; indeed I believe him to be a real Christian. Being one of a large family, the children of a clergyman in the west of Scotland, he was sent out early in life to the West Indies, and from our high estimate of his character and talents, our late friend Mr. Henry Thornton, who was then at the head of the Sierra Leone Company, . . . a society formed for the improvement of Africa, and as a refuge for a number of negro slaves whom the British government had encouraged to leave their masters during the American revolutionary war, . . . sent for him from Jamaica, that he might occupy some respectable station in the new colony. . . . Let me remind you, in a parenthesis, that when the colony was formed we believed (on Mr. Pitt's authority) that there was a strong probability of a twenty years' continuance of peace, and Parliament had then given us reason to believe the slave trade should be immediately abolished. Had these confident expectations been realized, the fate of the colony would have been very different; and perhaps the only fault was, its not being dissolved when the French war broke out, and Parliament flinched from its decision as to the slave trade, though I know not how we could have dissolved it consistently with the safety of the colonists whom government had already brought there.

Mr. Macaulay on coming to England was for some time domesticated with Mr. H. Thornton, who thought so

highly of him as to propose that he should be appointed governor of Sierra Leone, as he soon after was, with the universal approbation of the directors. In this number were then, Lord Teignmouth, Mr. Charles Grant, Granville Sharp, I think Mr. Elliot (Pitt's brother-in-law,) myself, and several other public men. While there, Mr. Macaulay acted so as to obtain our utmost confidence and approbation, being sometimes placed in circumstances of extreme difficulty and danger; and when he returned, he brought with him a number of the young natives whom he had kept in his own house while in Africa, superintending their education. From the opportunity he had possessed of acquiring information concerning the state of the slaves in the West Indies, and of the slave trade, of the character of the natives, &c. in Africa, he naturally became a sort of *primum mobile* in our African and West Indian system; and though soon after marrying, with the prospect, gradually realized, of a large family, with impaired health, and having little or no property, and therefore looking for his family support to a mercantile business in which he engaged, he was, nevertheless, always most profuse in giving freely his time and money too, as well as his extraordinary talents and experience, to the support of the common cause. In such a world as this, it was but too natural that he should become a butt for the shafts of party calumny and malice; and I am sorry to say, that the efforts made to injure his character, though by the grossest falsehoods, were for a time but too successful. The newspapers which espoused the cause of the West Indians, who have paid very liberally for support, were peculiarly forward in diffusing these calumnies; and after sustaining much abuse, Mr. Macaulay was at length advised by his friends to institute a prosecution. This being of course resisted by all the arts of dilatoriness with which the law abounds, more especially by assertions concerning Mr. Macaulay's conduct in the West Indies thirty years before, the truth or falsehood of which charges could only be ascertained on the spot, the suit is not even yet completely ended, but the ex-

penses have already amounted to more than two thousand pounds, though we are assured the solicitors have been very moderate in their charges. Considering all the circumstances of the case, more especially that it was only in consequence of his efficiency and zeal in our cause that he was attacked and subjected to this heavy charge, it would manifestly have been utterly unjust if the friends of the negroes had not made common cause with him, the rather, indeed, because it may be truly affirmed that his family had already lost much by his attaching himself so nobly to us. It was therefore agreed, that application should be privately made to those who were best able to contribute, he himself being allowed only to subscribe one share to the common fund...the permission so to do being granted to him whenever it should be notified to him that the requisite sum had been nearly raised, for the intention to make the effort has not yet been communicated to him. I will give you below a list of those who have agreed to come forward, among whom I understand the solicitor who conducts the cause to be himself one.

Yours, &c.

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I will mention one instance of Macaulay's generosity. By a combination of sagacity and perseverance, he detected an attempt made by a high diplomatic character to render an apparent act of public duty the means of carrying off a number of slaves from Africa to Brazil:—the vessel was prosecuted, and the profits to the seizer (Macaulay himself) were of the value of above 1200*l.*, which, however, he gave up to the Custom House officers for the benefit of the general cause.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO S. HOARE, ESQ., JUN.

Hampstead Heath, Sunday night, July 27, 1828.

My dear young Friend,

I am persuaded my troubling you with a few lines will need no apology from me, when you know that your dear mother suggested to me the idea of so doing. Yet I hope it is needless for me to assure you (and yet this must be my main purpose) that I take great and sincere interest in your goings on.

Your dear father was about your own age, I remember, when by his father I was introduced to him, and I formed a confident hope that he would in after-life become a good man; consequently a blessing to his country, having the root of happiness within himself, and the fruit when ripened to gratify and refresh others. I rejoice to hear that you are endeavouring to use all the means of improving yourself which Providence throws in your way; but I most of all rejoice to hear that you manifest in these your early years a disposition to enter into and press forward in that narrow way which leadeth unto life eternal. We have the highest authority for saying that you will find it a way of pleasantness and peace; for you will look for your happiness to Him who can even give "songs in the night," and in the midst of outward trials can give light and joy to the inner man! But I must lay down my pen, assuring you that it has been my wish and shall be my prayer that you may be an honour to your name, a comfort to the advancing years of those you love most dearly (blessed be God this is an enjoyment of which I can speak from my own experience.) May you enjoy a protracted course of usefulness and comfort, to be followed by a still better portion in a better world! Accept this assurance from

Your affectionate old Friend,

But not so old as affectionate,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed : Private.—Dear Stephen *suo more* affectionate and pious.)

Kensington Gore, Wednesday evening,
December 3, 1828.

My dear Wilberforce,

I am happy and thankful to hear that you have returned home in improved and comfortable health. On my return from Missenden to chambers on Monday, I was tantalized with an invitation from Macaulay to meet you at dinner, of which I could not avail myself. I might have broken through my rule on such an occasion, though not yet willing to relinquish it; but was obliged, by weighty reasons, to come here as soon as I could quit my office; and though I meant to call in my way, or rather out of my way, found myself too late to do so. In the morning I was equally unfortunate, having slept so late in consequence of having risen for my journey the day before at five, that I could barely save my distance at chambers. I was half angry with you for not having apprised me beforehand that you were to be for a short time within my reach. Till the receipt of M.'s letter I supposed you still at Bath.

You probably do not recollect, my dear friend, but I still do, and with affectionate gratitude, a visit that you made me in Sloane Street this day exactly thirty-four years ago. It was a very useful one. This is one of the anniversaries on which I remember sorrows that this life cannot compensate, but trace from them the wonderful and beneficent ways of that divine benefactor, who,

“ Behind a frowning Providence oft hides a smiling face.”

I remember an incident that occurred just as you entered my room, and which I believe I told you of at the time, that might almost give one confidence in the *sortes Virgilianæ*. I had for the first time caught up a book to turn the current of my dismal and intolerable thoughts. It was a Virgil, which one of my boys had

brought from school and left in the room, and I strangely enough opened on that affecting passage in which the spirit of the departed Creusa appears to her distracted husband, while searching for her amidst the ruins of burning Troy, and comforts him with the predictions of future blessings from his loss. The *regia conjux* had then no comfort or supposable meaning for me, though the general spirit of the passage, connected as it was with my own sudden and dreadful privation, and with the unseen purposes of Providence in such events, gave a soothing turn to my thoughts. I have since, on the recollection of it, applied the *regia conjux* to one of whom I had then never heard, and whose royalty was of the best kind, and is now, I doubt not, marked with a celestial crown. Nor was your coming at that crisis, and your subsequent compassionate and affectionate conduct, a needless link in the chain of events that led to my union with her. I sincerely wished for a long time after to drop all intercourse with you and the friends that surrounded you. I disliked all society except that of my poor orphans and the kind relations who took the charge of them. I wished and expected soon to die; and besides, had a blamable aversion for the company of those who stood higher in rank or fortune than myself, especially for the Pittite aristocrats, whom I generally met at your table. But you, my kind friend, would not suffer me to forsake you; and the recollection of your tender, generous conduct at that crisis of my afflictions was a tie that bound my heart to you, till I found, two or three years after, another bond of attachment.

Give my love to Mrs. W., and whatever other members of your dear family are now at Highwood Hill.

Ever yours very affectionately,

J. STEPHEN.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, February 9, 1829.

My very dear —,

If you do not possess a set of Venn's sermons, I must send them to you, and recommend them, not for your parishioners' use, but for your own. They contain much good sense, and a strain of true piety. He was a man, for whose writings, it will, I doubt not, be a strong recommendation to you, that I entertained for the man himself the highest esteem and affection. There was in him a singular compound of the pathetic and the humorous. He was very shy, as is commonly the case with those who most deserve that we should take pains to obtain their friendship; but when you did succeed, you obtained a prize well worth the price you had paid, how great soever, of pains and perseverance, for it. I am sorry to find that two of the books you wished to be sent to you, Eusebius and Gibbon's Answer to his opponents, have been sought for in vain.

I hope you are reading Richmond's Life. He was an excellent man, and without any superiority of talents or acquirements was eminently useful. Indeed, the pains he took with his parishioners indicated such a zeal in his Master's cause, as could scarcely fail to impress the hearts of his flock with a sense of the interest he took in their well being. It slipped out of my mind while I was writing the last sentence, that Lord Sheffield, the editor of Gibbon's posthumous works and his great friend, assured me one day when sitting next him at Lambeth on a public day, that Gibbon assured him that he had not at first any idea of attacking Christianity in those chapters—"*credat Judæus?—haud ego.*"

By the way, I have purchased, deeming it a duty, Bowdler's expurgated edition of Gibbon's History. "*Virginibus puerisque canto.*" Bowdler's work deserves encouragement. I have been interrupted repeatedly whilst writing this letter, hence my forgetting just now that I was speaking of Mr. Richmond's pastoral dili-

gence. One summer for several months we were only four miles from Turvey, Richmond's parish—he then habitually met his parishioners four, if not five, times in the week. One evening he would read some book, and make remarks upon it; *e. g.* the Pilgrim's Progress; on another he would pray and sing hymns. I have been at one of these evening meetings, and have seen a barn, fitted up a little for the purpose, filled with the peasantry in the smock frocks in which they had been labouring. I forget whether or not you have Scott's Life—it is well worth your habitual perusal. Have you Chalmers's Scripture References? I mean the first tract. I will send you it as soon as I can. I will enclose a bank note for 5*l.* for your poor, and I beg you will always tell me honestly when you want aid to your charity fund. I am forced to scribble in extreme haste. My very dear —, I daily pray twice for you, and so I hope you do for me. Oh! prayer, prayer is the grand maintainer of the spiritual life. It is on the account of its curtailing or hurrying over your private prayers that I have always been jealous of early hours for family prayers at home, and of late rising.

May God in Christ bless you and yours in your souls, and yourself in your ministrations! is the earnest wish and prayer of your affectionate father,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, February 18, 1829.

My dear —,

Though you live in a place and in circumstances which may not afford many striking matters for narrative, yet where correspondents love each other as affectionately as we do, matter can never be wanting. It would interest me to hear how you are going on in your parish, what you preach about, how you are received by your flock, and in what state you find them, both in what respects their spiritual state and their temporal

condition, (my fingers just now are cold, and I have so indifferently formed a pen, that it keeps slipping about, a circumstance fully entitled to a place in the list of the minor miseries,) at what hours you breakfast, dine, &c.; in short, send me a journal of your ordinary days, for I presume they are one very much like the other.

You hear, I presume, the bustle at Oxford. I own I think they are using Peel harshly. I well remember from experience, that one of the most painful trials of principle to which a public man is exposed is when his sense of duty prompts him to change a course of conduct he has long deemed it his duty to pursue, conscious that he will thereby bring on him not only the hostility and reproaches, but the gibes and jeers, of his old friends, perhaps incur a breach of friendship long and dear. I cannot but believe that the Duke of Wellington is convinced that if we were still to pursue the course we have been taking for years a civil war would be the consequence; and as he is a man not likely from delicacy or fear to be unwilling to go to war, and from sagacity and experience better fitted than any other man living for forming a just calculation of the result, and particularly as he is not likely from timidity to see the danger in too strong a light, I am disposed to give more weight to his judgment than to that of any other person.—The post is on the point of departure.

Ever affectionately yours,
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS WILBERFORCE.

(Private.)

Highwood Hill, July 15, 1830.

My dear —,

I was compelled to make up in extreme haste, and to finish full as rapidly, the letter to you which is just despatched to the post office, and I recollected, when it was too late to supply the defect, that there was

not in my epistle a single word of a serious, or rather of a religious character. Now, though I do not carry my principle in this respect so far as some good people have done, thinking it wrong that any letter under any circumstances should be sent off without containing some religious sentiments, yet at my time of life, almost a year beyond that stated by the Psalmist to be the ordinary limit of the life of man, and more especially when a daughter is addressed, I do think there should be some recognition of those influential principles which ought ever to be uppermost in a Christian's bosom. And if from any one the constant exhibition of religious principles and feelings might be expected, assuredly from me, in whose heart there may well be expected a continual breathing forth of adoring gratitude to my God and Saviour, for all the long course of goodness and mercy by which my life has been distinguished. I have often thought that if I had been imbued with the notions described in Mrs. Grant's letters from the Highlands, (notions which represent the Deity as being jealous of the happiness of his creatures,) I should certainly have supposed that I must prepare for some signal misfortune, to counterbalance all the accumulated blessings which had been poured out on me in such rich and increasing profusion. But oh how much more generous, as well as just, are the views of the character of the Supreme Being, our heavenly Father, which we derive from the word of God! "God is love!" Even under a dispensation which, when compared with that of the gospel, may be deemed to wear somewhat of a harsh and repulsive countenance, the Jews were told that the laws prescribed to them were devised for their good; but under our more generous and gracious system, judgment and punishment are termed the strange work of God; and mercy, and long-suffering, and bounty, and loving-kindness, are his habitual dispositions towards us. Even when speaking to sinners (there is scarcely any passage in the whole Bible which has afforded me so much comfort) the language is, "The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear Him, *in them that hope in His*

mercy." Only consider the force of that assurance, and the comfort it must give to any who may be apprehensive of being presumptuous in indulging hopes of pardon. They are assured, not that they may presume to hope that their sins may be forgiven, but that by so hoping they will display the very disposition of mind in which God takes pleasure. Believe me to be,

Ever your very affectionate Father,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Highwood Hill, Middlesex, August 7, 1830.

My dear Stephen,

First, your letter shall be laid up in safety, and next, I really am in better spirits about our cause than I have been for some time past. It is not merely that we have gained, as I believe, several members by the new elections, though that, I trust, is something, but I cannot help believing that any government that will be now formed in France, will be favourable to the real, practical, entire extinction of the slave trade; and very soon after the meeting of our Parliament an address must be moved, praying the Crown to concert with the foreign courts for the carrying into execution of the various treaties. An engagement to abolish has now been contracted by every power in Europe, and by Brazil in the New World, and many of the South American republics, and also Mexico, either have prohibited or will prohibit it. It would be a grand achievement—just a measure to hold out a strong inducement to the new member for Yorkshire (for such I doubt not Brougham now is) to move for a congress of the great powers of Europe, or of the world, to arrange the method of carrying this great measure into execution. I really believe that his election for Yorkshire, on the ground of his being the advocate of the slaves, will have a powerful effect. You see my prospect is not so dark as yours; yet I well remember your letters. I forget the

signature in which you accumulated a number of instances in which the scourge appeared to have been already inflicted on the chief provokers of the penal vengeance of the Almighty, by their long-continued devastations in Africa. I hope you have those letters in safe custody. In forming our plan of operations, I trust we shall pay due regard to its manifest expediency, whether with a view to our own chieftains, or to the rank and file in the House of Commons who were made to declare themselves friendly to our cause.

I hope you will let us see you before you go to Missenden for the summer. We naturally wish to see our dear ——'s future field of operations, and shall probably, please God, go to him in the Isle of Wight ere long, for I shall wish to take an autumnal course of Bath water. While it pleases God to continue this crazy tenement, it appears right to endeavour to keep it fit for some occupation. But alas! my dear Stephen, I am a most unprofitable servant. I assure you the consideration often lowers my spirits sadly, but—I was here forced to lay down my pen, and have only time to say, May every blessing be your portion!

So ever prays

W. WILBERFORCE.

So Brougham is M. P. for Yorkshire.

LORD HOLLAND TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Holland House, October 1, 1830.

My dear Sir,

I enclose a *Moniteur* at the request of Lord John Russell, and his letter to explain the object of it, not only as an old fellow-labourer, though a humble one, in the vineyard, but even in a capacity you do not equally respect, that of a West Indian proprietor. I am most anxious to see the Abolition enforced, and agree entirely with Lafayette that this is a most favourable moment for enforcing it, by making it piracy according to the law

of nations, and authorizing all armed ships of whatever state to seize all, under whatever flag they may be, who are engaged in that traffic. You will do me the justice to believe that on the other parts of the subject I am not less sincere in wishing to see the object accomplished, though I do not always agree in the means of attaining it. Perhaps, being both an old abolitionist and a West Indian proprietor, I may take Sir Roger de Coverley's liberty of censuring both, and I own, if the former would talk a little less, and the latter do a little more, I think the progress to the end in view would be much more safe, and I believe more rapid too, than it is likely to become in the present state of irritation between the parties. Pray forgive me for allowing my pen to run on so much. It is long since I had the pleasure of seeing you, and I am gratified at the opportunity of recalling myself to your recollection.

Yours truly,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

Both Lady Holland and myself were delighted to hear so favourable an account of you from Sir James Mackintosh.

Z. MACAULAY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

London, November 26, 1832.

My dear Friend,

I have to give you some good news as to our cause. Sir James Graham has had an interview with Buxton. He saw him as the delegate of the cabinet. The interview was satisfactory. The government feel that some effectual step for extinguishing slavery must be taken this session, and they wish us to say what that shall be. They admit that it is now in our power to dictate terms, with which, in the present state of feeling in this country, if not unreasonable, they might be forced

to comply. But it is their real wish to be able to concur with us, and they therefore desire us to state our plan. If it is safe and practicable, they will adopt it as their own, and carry it through the House. The basis of it, it is felt not merely on account of the public feeling at home, but on account of the state of the islands and the violence of the planters, must be emancipation under due precautionary regulations.

Buxton at once explained to them our views, and gave them the following outline:—This country must go to the expense of an efficient paid magistracy and a strong police, and even an armed force to back that police, in order to keep not merely the blacks, but still more the whites, in complete submission.

This police will mainly consist of the free now in the islands, aided by the most intelligent and religious of the present slaves.

The slaves shall remain as they are for a year or two; but be delivered wholly from the arbitrary power of the master and from the whip, and shall work five days in the week for reasonable wages, to be fixed by protectors, Saturday and Sunday being their own. The working hours of the day shall be nine or ten, and all beyond that, and all night-work, shall be voluntary on the part of the labourer, and paid for by agreement. At the end of a year, or two years at most, the present slave will be freed from the necessity of working for his former master, except by his own choice and by mutual contract, and may contract with whom he will and for what wages he can get, or may buy, or rent, or cultivate, land for himself. In short, he will then be free, but only bound to work in some way and for some one, and wholly to maintain himself and family by industry.

In all other respects, the laws for black and white, as to person and property, connubial rights, evidence, &c. are to be the same, except as to restrictions for a time on idleness and vagrancy, which are to be met chiefly by mulcts, and labour on the tread-mill, for example.

Schools and religious instruction to be made paramount objects.

All this to be accompanied by a loan to the planters, to relieve them from their heavy incumbrances.

The question of compensation to be equitably considered, (after a term of years, say five or ten,) as to the profitable working of the old or new system.

All further sales of human beings, or separations of families, to cease at once.

Sir James Graham not only did not shrink from all this, but said it was the very line in which his ideas and those of his colleagues had moved, and he thought Government would be ready to go with us generally. He wished the outline, when ready, to be at once submitted to Government for consideration, and he had little doubt of our coming to an amicable agreement. I have since conferred with —, and he thinks things are ripe for obtaining nearly the full extent of our wishes. We shall of course lose no time in propounding our propositions.

I fear I make myself imperfectly understood ; but the main features of the plan are the substitution of law and wages for compulsory labour and arbitrary punishment—with schools and ministers.

All this is of course strictly private at present—but I could not withhold from you our raised expectations.

In haste, ever yours,

Z. MACAULAY.

Z. MACAULAY, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

May 15, 1833.

My dear Friend,

This day ten years ago the abolition of slavery was first made a question in Parliament. Last night its death-blow was struck. I send you a copy of the debate. Stanley's allusion to you was quite overpowering,

and electrified the House. My dear friend, let me unite with you in thanks to God for this mercy.

I have really been much occupied, and unable to write—but I have mourned over Sargent —, and felt all your trials.

Ever yours affectionately,
Z. MACAULAY.

THE END.

